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THE NEW REPUBLIC

Daniel Pipes on Israel's Secret Syria Connection

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July 5, 1999

THE RISE OF THE E-CAMPAIGN

WILL IT TRANSFORM AMERICAN POLITICS?

BY DANA MILBANK

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CORRESPONDENCE

NATO without borders

TO THE EDITORS:

David Rieff argues that the once brilliantly successful efforts of organizations such as Doctors Without Borders/Médicins Sans Frontières (MSF) are no longer needed ("Lost Kosovo," May 31). The overwhelming refugee crisis in Kosovo is supposed to demonstrate that there is no longer a role for "traditional" humanitarian aid, that the time has come for a new "paradigm": NATO or private companies will handle the tasks.

But how does this square with the world as MSF sees it? Will NATO provide meningitis inoculations in equatorial Africa? Will private companies attend to the victims of land mines worldwide—land mines for which NATO nations must bear large responsibility? Does anyone think that NATO or private companies will sustain research into Kashin-Beck Syndrome ("big-bone disease") in Tibet? Or treatment of Kala Azar in southern Sudan?

Rieff also wonders, skeptically, about the world's willingness to respond in such unfamiliar places as the former Soviet republic of Tajikistan. Why does he ignore MSF's response to hemorrhagic fever in nearby Khazakstan? He wonders whether anyone will attend to atrocities in Sierra Leone, as if MSF had not responded to precisely this scene of human brutality with emergency surgical teams.

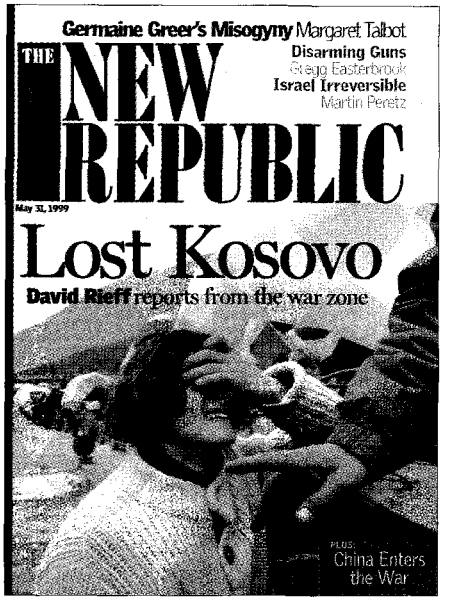
Americans may choose the complacent view Rieff offers, but they will not be following a sober realism or putting into play an intellectually powerful new model. Rather, they will be indulging a cynical avoidance of the perennial and defining task of being human: to see and respond to the suffering of others, even those who are distant and so very difficult to help. This is the true meaning of humanitarian aid; it is impervious to the fashions of weekly journalism.

ERIC REEVES
Northampton, Massachusetts

Shooting off

TO THE EDITORS:

In discussing the Second Amendment implications for requiring gun-safety devices, Gregg Easterbrook writes that because the Second Amendment has not been enforced against the states (though not for the reasons Easterbrook gives) "there is little doubt states could legislate firearm safety standards" ("Load and Lock," May 31). Actually, there is considerable doubt they could do so constitutionally, but that's because of the commerce clause, not the Second Amendment.



The commerce clause of the Constitution gives Congress the power to regulate commerce "among the several States," but the clause has also been interpreted by the Supreme Court for more than 100 years to limit *state* legislation that interferes with, discriminates against, or places an undue burden on interstate commerce. In recent years, the Court has struck down state laws regulating the length of freight trains, requiring a certain type of mud flap on trucks traveling through a state, and prohibiting tractor-trailers from pulling double and triple trailers through a state. The rationale often expressed is that these state laws, if enacted by every state with the inevitable attendant state-to-state variations, would either force interstate commercial actors to comply with the most restrictive state laws, thus in effect allowing one state to legislate for all others, or ensure what was described in one opinion as a "virtual welter" of conflicting state laws.

If states are not allowed to require different sets of mud flaps on trucks passing through, they would have a tough time arguing that all 50 states are entitled to subject gun manufacturers to separate gun-safety regimes. It is clear that such a regime—if one is truly needed—should come from Congress and not be left to the states.

BRANNON P. DENNING
New Haven, Connecticut

TO THE EDITORS:

Gregg Easterbrook is only half right when he says that "[t]he Second Amendment specifies a right to bear arms but also that firearms be 'well-regulated.'" Though the Second Amendment does specify that the "right to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed," it is the *militia* that the amendment says shall be "well-regulated," not firearms.

As the Supreme Court pointed out in its 1939 decision *United States* v. *Miller*, the "militia" that the Second Amendment describes was made up of the ordinary citizenry bearing arms that they owned themselves. The Second Amendment thus ensured that the militia could be well-regulated to ensure its military effectiveness but that the right of the people to keep and bear arms could not be infringed. (Indeed, by ensuring that the populace had the right to keep and bear arms, it made it effectively impossible for a negligent or hostile Congress to abolish the militia—an important thing to the Framers, who deeply feared standing armies.) And, in fact, the 1792 Militia Act, passed shortly after the Second Amendment was ratified, actually ordered citizens to possess a rifle, ammunition, and other military equipment. Thus, under the Second Amendment, Congress might be able to *require* that citizens own an assault weapon, but it could not forbid them from doing so. That power, if it exists at all, must be sought elsewhere in the Constitution.

GLENN HARLAN REYNOLDS
Professor of Law
University of Tennessee
Knoxville, Tennessee

TO THE EDITORS:

Gregg Easterbrook's contorted logic regarding gun safety may fool the naïve, but not experienced shooters. Most people wanting to know whether a revolver is loaded would simply flip open the cylinder and glance at the back ends of the chambers. The only occasion to inspect it from the business end would be when someone who doesn't have your well-being in mind is pointing it at you.

As is customary with most gun manufacturers, the maker of Easterbrook's shotgun furnished him with a copy of the "Ten Commandments of Firearms." Commandment number one is: "Don't rely on your gun's safety." While this is intended to help save Easterbrook's skin, he interprets it as an admission by the manufacturer that the safety on the shotgun is inadequate.

For all his being a "college graduate," Easterbrook doesn't seem to get the basic message the manufacturer is trying to convey. Since guns are known to fail, when handling guns shooters habitually follow an exaggerated code of behavior known as

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the ten commandments of firearms safety. Fail to obey them and you will eventually have a rude surprise, as did Easterbrook when he blasted his couch.

LANDON LOCKETT
Austin, Texas

GREGG EASTERBROOK REPLIES:
Brannon P. Denning cites only some aspects of the never-ending argument regarding the commerce clause and its relationship to other parts of the Constitution. Courts do sometimes allow different product standards in different states; for example, many cars sold in California, New England, and a few other regions at the moment have different anti-pollution features from cars sold in the Midwest. And courts have long sanctioned different state regulatory approaches to firearm safety—a reason why, say, handgun restrictions are stronger in Massachusetts than in Texas.

Glenn Harlan Reynolds correctly points out that the preamble of the Second Amendment places firearm rights in the context of militia formation. In the past ten years, legal scholars, including Reynolds, have engaged in a lively debate regarding how to understand militia formation in a modern world in which weapons are advanced and a professional army, not citizen irregulars, defends the state.

Suffice it to say that legal and historical opinions about the preamble of the Second Amendment fall all over the map. Was it intended as a sop to the South so that militias could hold down slave rebellions? Did the Framers think the true role of the militia would be to oppose the country's own government? Does the Second Amendment create a military duty for every citizen? Read at face value, the militia clause would seem to oblige Congress to outlaw revolvers and single-shot weapons, which have no military utility, while permitting private ownership of the weapons of modern war—machine guns, mortars, heat-seeking missiles, etc.

Misandry

TO THE EDITORS:
Margaret Talbot is dead-on in her critique of Germaine Greer's *The Whole Woman* ("The Female Misogynist," May 31). However, while referring to female "misogyny" is certainly legitimate in the ironic sense intended by Talbot, there do exist words that denote man-hating and man-hater, respectively, in a literal sense: "misandry" and "misandrist." I have always found it disturbing that "misogyny" and its related conjugations and declensions have become such buzzwords in our nation's zeitgeist while analogous terms for man-hatred and its practitioners are not even present in most abridged dictionaries! As Talbot makes clear in her essay, sexist prejudice is far from being an exclusively male domain.

JOSEPH ENIS
Cambridge, Massachusetts

TO THE EDITORS:
In an otherwise cogent piece, Margaret Talbot has included the seemingly obligatory snipe at evolutionary psychology. Why are women so afraid of Darwinian explanations of human behavior? To simply discuss whether genetic prerogatives may have shaped the structure of our minds and customs does not in any way dictate adherence to these influences. Rather, the knowledge of the forces that have shaped our consciousness should be liberating. Evolutionary psychology is not misogyny. It can be misused to try to enforce gender roles, but, then again, so can astrology. The point is that generalizations about evolution-based gender roles can be valid even if they don't explain all facets of human behavior.

O. VON HUTEN
St. Louis, Missouri

Spin control

TO THE EDITORS:
Jacob Heilbrunn accurately anticipated the White House's response to the release of the Cox committee report on technology transfers to China ("Secrets and Lies," May 24). Unfortunately, the White House strategy—blame-shifting and reflexive minimizing of the committee's findings—has done a disservice to public debate on the crucial issues raised by that report.

However, Heilbrunn unwittingly demonstrates why the White House persists in spinning: it works. Thus, Heilbrunn purports to contrast Chairman Chris Cox's measured demeanor with the "wild accusations ... made without any evidence to back them up" by the House and Senate campaign finance investigations regarding Chinese involvement in our 1996 elections. Speaking for Senator Fred Thompson's investigation, on which I worked, there were neither "wild accusations" nor a lack of evidence. The Thompson committee concluded that, while it could not determine conclusively whether the PRC funded, directed, or encouraged those DNC contributions made by individuals with extensive ties to the PRC from funds traced to bank accounts in the Greater China area, there was strong circumstantial evidence of PRC government involvement. That conclusion has been amply corroborated by the recent testimony of Johnny Chung, who detailed how the head of China's military intelligence provided him with $300,000 to donate to President Clinton's reelection campaign. Of course, the Thompson committee did not have access to Chung or other crucial witnesses because those witnesses either pleaded the Fifth Amendment or fled the country.

The idea that the Thompson committee's treatment of the topic was anything but responsible and understated (as FBI Director Louis Freeh later told Thompson) is simply a vestige of the White House's earlier, mendacious spin operation. Shame on Heilbrunn for ignoring the lesson his own article teaches.

JOHN H. COBB
Charlotte, North Carolina

The exploited class

TO THE EDITORS:
Tyce Palmaffy's article about the push for a graduate student union at Yale contains a number of half-truths and distortions that require a response ("Class Struggle," June 7).

The article reports successful unionization efforts at a number of public universities, most recently U.C. Berkeley. It fails to note that a similar unionization drive was defeated by students at the University of Minnesota.

The author takes at face value a highly contentious document put out by the Graduate Employees and Students Organization (GESO) that affects to deplore the increase in graduate student teaching at Yale. He does not mention that this "reported" increase has been, in part, due to the administration's policy of limiting section sizes to no more than 20 students—something that GESO had been advocating for some time. He also fails to mention that the vast majority of graduate "teaching" consists of leading discussion sections and labs for courses whose main instructors are full-time faculty members.

Finally, the author's belief that graduate students are "de facto employees" with no say over their terms of employment is completely misleading. The terms of graduate employment are subject to continual and ongoing discussion between university administrators and the graduate student assembly. The claim that graduate students should be a bargaining unit within the university, much like dining hall and maintenance workers, entirely overlooks the fact that these same students are the recipients of a generous range of tuition, stipendiary, and health benefits, in addition to dissertation fellowships, all from the very administration they claim is exploiting them. If this constitutes an exploited class, then Marx must be turning over in his grave.

STEVEN B. SMITH
Professor,
Department of Political Science
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

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TRB

FROM WASHINGTON

Leaky

WASHINGTON IS ABUZZ over Bob Woodward's new book, *Shadow*, which has just been excerpted in *The Washington Post*. *Shadow* is classic Woodward, taking you inside White House meetings on the Clinton scandals, including intriguing conversations between President Clinton and his lawyer in the Paula Jones case. "Robert S. Bennett, leaning close to his client in the private study off the Oval Office, announced his suspicion in an aggressive baritone," one excerpt reads. "'Mr. President,' he said, 'I find your explanation about one of the women frankly unbelievable.'"

The question on everyone's lips is: Who's the new Deep Throat? Woodward says that President Clinton refused to be interviewed, so there are only three ways he could have gotten the Bennett-Clinton stuff. Scenario One: He made it up. Scenario Two: One or more third parties were also privy to these details. Scenario Three: Bennett blabbed. I think we can safely dispense with Scenario One. Scenario Two is possible but murky, as I'll explain later. As for Scenario Three, Bennett, who declined to return my calls, told the *Post*: "I have never breached the attorney-client privilege in my entire life and I do not know who Woodward's sources are—period."

Bennett does know that, with rare exceptions, discussing private attorney-client conversations with someone other than another attorney on the case is a violation of the D.C. bar's ethical rules. It would be OK only if President Clinton gave his permission, but somehow I doubt the president authorized Bob Bennett or anyone else to tell Woodward that Clinton is even more of a liar than we already knew. (If Woodward's source is one of Bennett's co-counsel, Bennett is in the clear, but the other lawyer or lawyers would be guilty of an ethical breach—though Bennett himself might still be in jeopardy if he knew they were leaking and didn't try to stop it.)

With that in mind, let's engage in a little informed guesswork. (Note that Bennett's seemingly categorical denial leaves a lot undenied—Bennett's not saying that Woodward's descriptions of his exact words are untrue. And just exactly what is a "source," anyway?)

Focus first on the circumstantial evidence, beginning with the fact that Woodward's source provided a conspicuously flattering portrayal of Bennett's performance in the Paula Jones matter—a portrayal very different from the general view of his handling of the case. The *Shadow* Bennett is not a thin-skinned and bombastic superlawyer whose best courtroom days are behind him. He is a tough-minded counselor who foresaw all the dangers in the president's way and tried, skillfully, to steer clear of them—only to be thwarted by the mistakes of Clinton and his handlers. Suspecting that the president was lying to him when he denied having extramarital affairs, Bennett cross-examined Clinton about his sex life and warned him he'd be impeached if his Jones deposition wasn't truthful. He personally remonstrated with Clinton not to step into Ken Starr's grand jury perjury trap and, for God's sake, not to let his testimony be videotaped—that appearance was Mickey Kantor's dumb idea, justified, to Bennett's horror, by polls.

If this didn't come from Bennett, he's got a secret admirer somewhere. Bruce Lindsey, the deputy White House counsel whom Woodward places at some of Bennett's skull sessions with the president? Lindsey is the ultimate closemouthed consigliere. Internet gossip Matt Drudge notes pointedly that Bob Barnett, a law partner of Clinton's other private attorney, David Kendall, was thanked personally in Woodward's acknowledgments. But why would either of these two breach their ethical duties just to give Woodward a lot of material that makes Bennett look smart? (Barnett and Kendall did not return calls, either.)

The passages about Bennett in *Shadow* are dotted with references to events inside Bennett's own head. Bennett "felt" this, he "figured" that. In *The Agenda*, his book about the Clinton administration's first-term economic policies, Woodward told his readers: "When someone is said to have 'thought' or 'felt' something, that description comes from the person himself or from someone to whom he said it directly." *Shadow* does not have a similar explanatory statement. When I asked Woodward if the rule applied to his new book nevertheless, his response was—as he might call it—a non-denial denial: "I'd have to literally go through every line of the book," he said. "There might be some cases where there's a literal difference."

But surely Woodward did not *relax* his standards of proof. And, if the rules of *The Agenda* do apply to *Shadow*, the hunt for Deep Throat II gets really interesting. For example, the anecdote about Bennett's August 5, 1998, attempt to talk the president out of going before the grand jury (page 433) includes the fact that "Bennett felt it was like fly-fishing for trout with light tackle." According to the book, Bennett was alone with Clinton in this meeting. Woodward did not interview Clinton (and Bennett never would have revealed such a thought to Clinton, anyway). Ergo, Bennett appears to be the source. The theoretical possibility that Bennett shared that precise fly-fishing simile "directly" with someone else leaves him a shred of plausible deniability, but now we're slicing the baloney pretty thin.

Finally, there's the January 1998 phone call between Hillary Clinton and Bennett in which the two discussed Whitewater. Among the revelations in this anecdote: The Clintons thought Bennett was a terrific lawyer, and Bennett thought David Kendall was screwing up. Sourcing? *Shadow*'s footnotes say: "Meeting quoted from author's interviews with knowledgeable source." Whoops—of course, it wasn't a meeting; unless someone else was listening in, it was a phone conversation between just two people, Hillary and Bennett. Did the press-phobic Hillary Clinton give Woodward two or more "interviews" in which she just happened to go out of her way to praise Bennett? If so, then the real story here is the sudden, secret reconciliation of Hillary and Woodward. Remember George Stephanopoulos's account (in *All Too Human*) of her rage at "disloyal" aides who talked to Woodward for *The Agenda*?

If Bennett did try to use Woodward's book to burnish his own reputation at the expense of a client's, it would be unprofessional—but, alas, utterly unoriginal in the image-conscious world of the Washington superlawyers. Bennett's client lied to him and made him look like a fool. You'd be steamed, too. And, as Bennett may or may not know, the D.C. bar only acts on alleged confidentiality violations if a client complains—not likely in this case. (Actual punishment is rare.)

But there would be another, more serious, irony if Bennett really did leak on the First Client. Much of the Lewinsky scandal revolved around issues of attorney-client privilege and personal and presidential privacy. The White House pleaded for a zone of confidentiality in which the president could make decisions without fear of embarrassing disclosure. Some of us took this argument seriously. How depressing to contemplate the possibility that one of the president's own defenders (secretly) did not.

CHARLES LANE

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WHITE HOUSE WATCH

Left Behind

KENNEBUNKPORT, ME., JUNE 13

THE 2000 CAMPAIGN, the morning papers tell us, has begun in earnest. This is because George W. Bush has hit the trail in those two early primary states, Greenwich and Kennebunkport. Oh, yes, he's stopping in Iowa and New Hampshire, too, but something in Bush's (blue) blood is making him visit both of these Yankee villages. In Greenwich, the Bush ancestral seat, he is to hold a fund-raiser. And, in Kennebunkport, he has stopped today at the family home, Walker's Point, for some fishing with Dad.

The day is somewhat less relaxing for the 150 of us journalists piling off tour buses at noon here at Walker's Point for a photo-op. A plump Bush aide stands before the herd and opens a foul mouth. "This isn't going to be all assholes and elbows," he barks. "This is going to go one way: my way." He then instructs us on how to walk up the driveway. "I'm going to take a slow pace because I'm tired," the stout fellow says. "If you walk in front of me, your credential gets pulled." Presently, the gentlemen and ladies of the press respond to him with various "moooo"s and "baaaaah"s. We are herded past the tennis court, the pond, and the swimming pool. "Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop! Stop!" the large fellow shouts. "Correspondents, stay back!"

It's going to be a long campaign.

I missed the first day of "Great Expectations," as the Bushies call their tour, and, as such, I did not get my official T-shirt. But I have a good excuse: I was picked off by Al Gore, who held a series of meetings with journalists yesterday at his residence. It was an obvious ploy to reduce Bush's press contingent, and I fell for it. Given the choice of Bush's plane with 105 reporters or Gore's dining room with three others, I opted to watch Bush's Iowa jaunt on TV.

In our meeting, Gore, who officially announces his candidacy this week, finally seemed to be approaching a cogent vision. "What I represent is continuity where our economy is concerned, but dramatic change as to our social programs," he said. "We faced an economic crisis in '92. That was the main theme of the last six and a half years. Unlike in '92, the central issue we face now is the crisis of the American family. Instead of a budget deficit, we have a care deficit." Clinton's 1992 theme was "Putting People First." Gore's 2000 mantra is "Putting Families First."

By laying out his themes now, along with a mind-numbing array of proposals, Gore and his aides hope to "smoke out" Bush: either the governor gives no specifics and looks like a lightweight or he is forced to offer specifics that alienate one side or the other. So far, Bush seems unfazed, still loading his stump speech with pleasant platitudes: "prosperity must have a purpose" and "leave no one behind" and "usher in the responsibility era." Indeed, the only thing Bush uttered in Iowa that could truly be called a concrete plan was a proposal to "teach our youngest children phonics." Now *there's* a winning theme. It's the phonics, stupid.

NEW CASTLE, N.H., JUNE 14

At every campaign stop, Bush delivers his "leave no one behind" line. Yet, this morning, leaving Kennebunkport, Bush aides do just that—to me. I join the caravan this morning, but, when two press buses get lost, a Bush aide asks me to go back and find them. I do as I am told, only to discover upon my return that the Bush staff has abandoned me. Is *that* compassionate?

I arrive in New Castle, a bit late and irritated, at a location the Bush aides call the most scenic coastal spot in New Hampshire. We will have to take their word for it; all that's visible this morning is a blanket of fog, and foghorns compete with Bush as he delivers the latest rendition of the speech. "Prosperity has a purpose.... Promote the peace.... Usher in the responsibility era.... Rally the armies of compassion.... Nobody gets left behind." Well, almost nobody.

Bush is good on the trail, almost unbelievably so. I constantly get the impression I am watching one of those movies about a political campaign in which the events are far too perfect to be real. The improbably handsome candidate, emerging from the obnoxious media pack with his wholesome wife, is constantly greeted by singing children, waving flags, and patriotic music.

With all the traps being laid for Bush on his maiden voyage, it's a wonder he hasn't yet fallen. The Democrats are running around with T-shirts comparing him to the Titanic and posters of question marks. Meanwhile, the press, his opponents, and even feisty locals are all looking for The Stumble. I thought we had it this afternoon, at the Bow firehouse, when a local asked if Bush would support full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Bush was stumped. "I don't know the answer," he said. "You may be surprised there are some things a presidential candidate doesn't know about." Actually, no. But the press consensus is that this is too obscure to be The Stumble. We don't know what the fund is, either.

The absence of The Stumble hasn't stopped rivals from carping. After Bush, courageously, says at a press conference this morning that he wouldn't have an abortion litmus test for Supreme Court justices, laughingstock Senator Bob Smith pipes up that "there should not be one pro-life vote for a George W. Bush presidency." I don't share Smith's outrage. In fact, just the opposite: Bush had been making some troubling nods to the right on this tour. In Iowa, he spoke about cutting marginal tax rates and shifting some Social Security tax into private accounts—both conservative boilerplate. Today, asked what his first two priorities would be as president, he says "restoration of the military budget" and "cut marginal rates." Really? Where's the child-literacy plan? The huge charity tax credit? Expanding the earned income tax credit for the working poor? Isn't prosperity's purpose the first priority, or the armies of compassion?

The Democrats are doing their best right now to paint Bush as a wolf in sheep's clothing, a Tom DeLay in disguise. I doubt that. Bush is no wolf—but he runs the risk of becoming a sheep, and that's worrying enough. His compassionate, communitarian intentions won't be of much use if DeLay dominates him once elected—and his bows to the right suggest it could happen.

After Bush's rally in New Castle, I overhear one of his local supporters, Bill Fortune, grousing about the twin evils of high taxes and feminists ("they're bitter and angry little people"). So I ask Fortune about Bush's soothing rhetoric. "He's got to sing that moderate tune because the voters are mostly Democrats and feminists," Fortune replies. What about his pitch for education? "He has to say that. The point is he needs to get elected. If we get a Republican president in there with a Republican Congress, it doesn't matter who he is."

That is exactly what scares me. I ask Fortune, who is wearing a Bush sticker and looks as if he might hit me, whether there is even the tiniest possibility that Bush really is a moderate. "You've been talking to space aliens," he replies. Later, I find myself wondering: What if he's right?

DANA MILBANK

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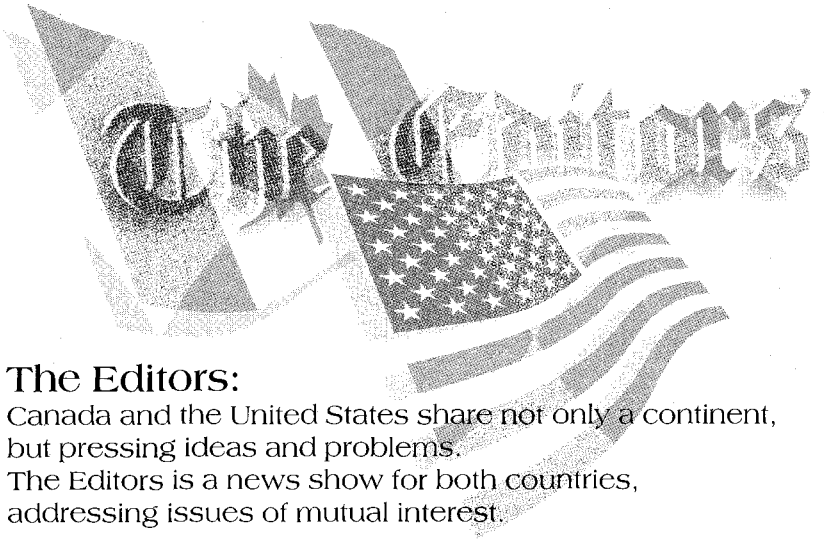

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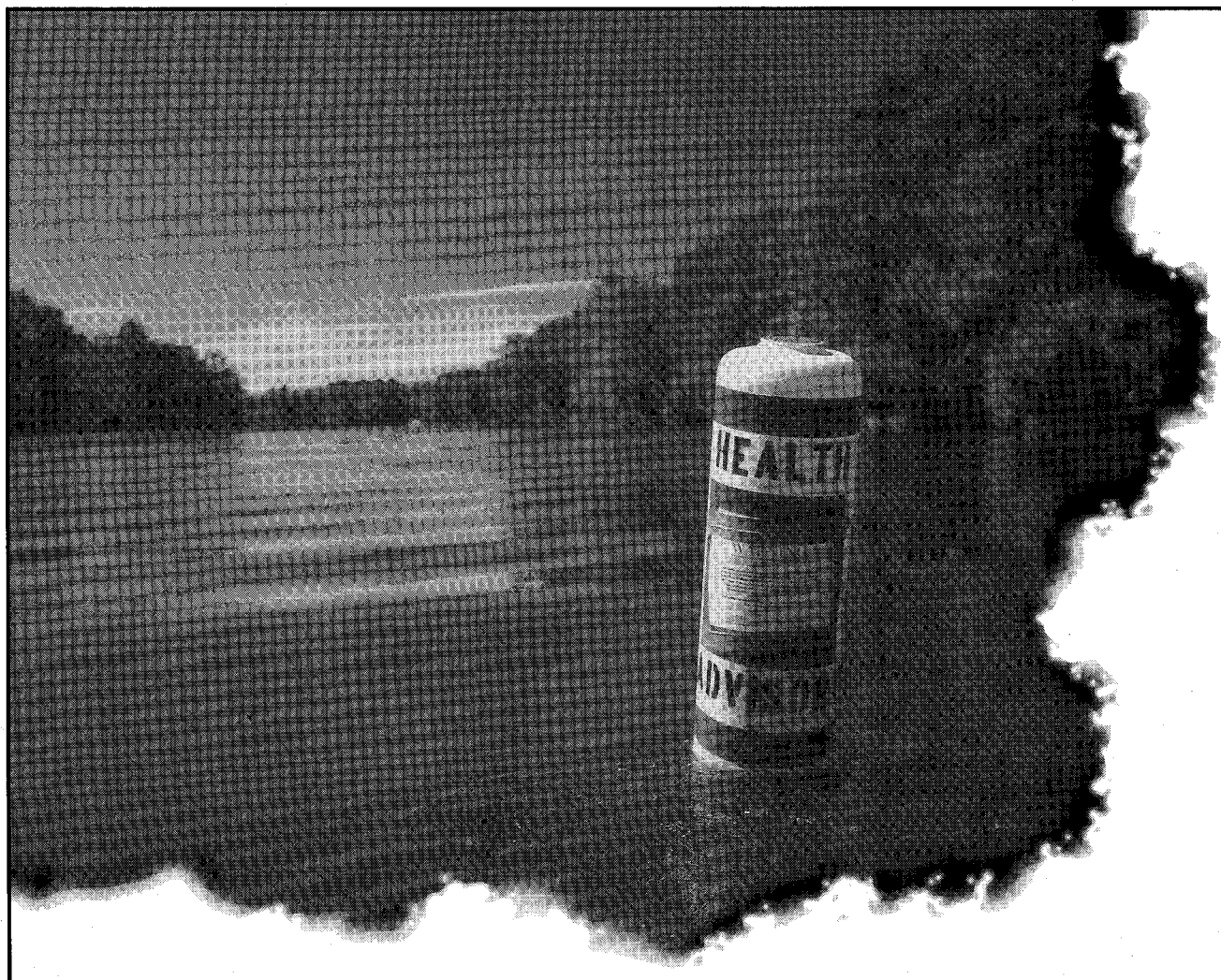

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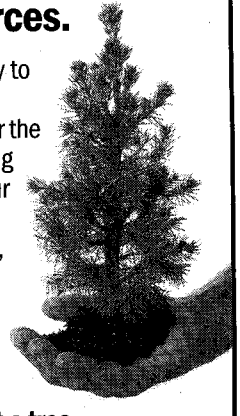

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Good Riddance

KEN STARR TO AMERICA: Never mind. Such was the message the independent prosecutor seemed to send on June 13 during an appearance on Fox News that got curiously little attention in Greater Washington. During the interview, Fox's Tony Snow asked Starr if he wished he'd said no to "any or all" of the Travelgate, Filegate, or Monica Lewinsky cases. Starr acknowledged that, in retrospect, it was "unwise" to have investigated "those." "I think it was sensible at the time," he said, "but I think it did lead to the perception that this was an eternal, permanent activity and that there was a personal kind of element to it as opposed to professional, simply trying to get the facts, assess the facts, and coming to their judgment." Does that mean we can forget the passionate testimony Starr gave at the House Judiciary Committee's impeachment hearings, in which he defended the necessity and integrity of his seemingly endless investigation into presidential lies about sex?

Of course, Starr does not blame himself so much as he does the office he holds. Testifying on Capitol Hill in April on the future of the Independent Counsel Act, he suggested that Congress should let the law lapse on June 30—with no replacement. "By its very existence, the Act promises us that corruption in high places will be reliably monitored, investigated, exposed, and prosecuted, through a process fully insulated from political winds. But that is more than the Act delivers, and more than it can deliver under our constitutional system," Starr intoned. He was exhibiting a lot of chutzpah then, too—nevertheless, we agree with him.

The Independent Counsel Act is a relic, passed in 1978—and renewed in 1994—to make sure that no president or high-ranking executive branch official could ever do what Richard Nixon tried to do unsuccessfully during Watergate: control or dismiss a prosecutor on the trail of White House misconduct. Initially, it enjoyed wide support. It even survived a test in the Supreme Court. But, as the years wore on and the investigations became more unwieldy and intrusive, it became increasingly clear that the previously dismissed objections to the law's existence were right on the mark.

First and foremost, the law is a constitutional monstrosity. The basic mandate of the office—to investigate a defendant rather than a particular crime—invites a kind of legal mission creep. Once begun, an investigation inevitably takes on a life of its own: the prosecutor and staff feel pressured to produce scalps in order to justify the outlay of time and taxpayer dollars. Most disturbingly, the office lacks accountability. A special prosecutor has an unlimited budget, operates under no time constraints, and effectively answers to no one—certainly not to the voting public. The job encourages an unhealthy conflation of the roles of judge, juror, legislator, and prosecutor—roles that are properly kept separate by our legal system. It also allows Congress to pass off to a nonelected body the distasteful and politically sensitive responsibility of constructing an impeachment case.

Equally disturbing, though, is the way in which the independent counsel law has distorted American political culture. By its mere presence, the law allows opportunistic officials to raise the specter of illegality over a broad range of political activity that, however sleazy, may not necessarily be criminal. This subjects targeted officials—and, indeed, the whole country—to countless hours of unnecessary investigation. Yet, paradoxically, it also lets some of the least savory politicians off the hook by allowing them to claim vindication when an investigation fails to turn up an indictable crime, as it often does. By criminalizing reprehensible but legal behav-

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ior, the independent counsel law has managed, perversely, to dilute the disciplinary power of shame.

To be sure, nobody really suggests that Congress should renew the statute as is. But a movement is afoot to modify the statute—to curb the office's abuses and limit its authority. A bipartisan commission of former politicians and political appointees—led by former Senate Majority Leaders George Mitchell and Bob Dole—put forth such a proposal in May. Under the Mitchell-Dole plan, the independent counsel would retain the abilities to conduct grand jury hearings and issue indictments, but the attorney general would exercise more authority over the scope of the investigation. After two years, for example, the attorney general would be required to determine whether the independent counsel's investigation should continue or cease.

Well-intentioned though it surely is, this effort misses the point. The problem is not the specifics of the independent prosecutor. It is the very idea of an independent prosecutor—an official effectively beholden to no democratically constituted authority, invested with wide-ranging powers of both investigation and judgment, and charged with prosecuting action that often might be better dealt with through the ordinary means of electoral politics and media exposure rather than the processes and procedures of criminal law. For all of its alleged flaws, the old system, in which investigations were the direct responsibility of the Justice Department and Congress, managed to cope with scandals ranging from Teapot Dome to Watergate. Twenty-one years have taught us that, if not quite perfect, that system is preferable to the alternatives. The impending expiration of the independent counsel law invites a response the 106th Congress is uniquely suited to provide: do nothing. ■

NOTEBOOK

HOLY WARS CONT'D: The highest body of the Serbian Orthodox Church, the Holy Synod, has officially called for Slobodan Milosevic's ouster. This is welcome news, but let's not get carried away. The Church wants Milosevic replaced with a leader who can provide "urgent protection for the monasteries of the Pec Patriarchy, Decani, Gracanica, and other monasteries" in Kosovo. As for Milosevic's systematic campaign to ethnically cleanse the province—for which he has been indicted by the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague—the Church is moderate in its reproaches. The court is nothing but "a tool" of the West, so Milosevic should not be prosecuted. Rather, the Church contents itself with the knowledge that Milosevic's "final judgment and justice resides with God." But why do the bishops suppose that God's ruling will be any less harsh than that of The Hague?

THE ENEMY OF MY ENEMY: Give the Republicans some credit: they're always willing to help a friend in need. And, with Bill Clinton's Justice Department suing Microsoft on antitrust grounds, no one needs a friend more than Microsoft CEO Bill Gates. That's why, ever since the antitrust trial began in October 1998, the GOP has been courting Gates. The latest chapter came this week, when Washington Senator Slade Gorton invited Gates to Capitol Hill to meet with him and a dozen of his GOP Senate colleagues. (The last time the billionaire software mogul visited the Capitol, in March 1998, he made a big show of stopping by the office of Democrat Patty Murray, the other Washington Senator, to have a doughnut.) Later that day, after a cordial chat with Gates, House Majority Leader Dick Armey promised a Contract with America-style "e-Contract that ensures that the hands of government stay off the levers of economic expansion." The Republican effort seems to be paying off. As Donald Lambro reports in *The Washington Times*, Gates has begun to spread some of his vast fortunes around to his new pals on the Hill. Since 1998, Microsoft employees and the company's PAC have given nearly $1 million to the GOP and its state and national committees—roughly two-thirds of Microsoft's political spending. Gates himself gave $14,000 to Republican candidates in the 1997-98 election cycle (he gave $13,000 to the Democrats). And, last week, at the Republican Congressional Committee dinner, Microsoft pitched in $25,000 to sponsor a table. Looks like the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Americans are closer to US health goal

—THE BOSTON GLOBE, June 11, 1999

Nation Is Falling Short Of Health Goals for 2000

—THE NEW YORK TIMES, same day

(Thanks to Robert Levy, Somerville, Massachusetts.)

HOME NEWS: This week Mark Strand completes his splendid and diligent term as TNR's poetry editor, for which we thank him emphatically, and passes the pleasures and the labors to Charles Wright. Our new poetry editor is one of America's most distinguished poets. As Helen Vendler wrote in TNR a few years ago, "[H]e sounds like nobody else, and he has remained faithful to insights and intuition—of darkness as of light—less than common in contemporary America." Wright has won a Pulitzer Prize, a National Book Critics Circle Prize, and just about every important award that an American poet can win, and he serves as the Souder Family Professor of English at the University of Virginia. We are proud to have him on our masthead. All poetry submissions should now be addressed to him at this address. We are glad also to announce that Melanie Rehak, a former assistant literary editor at TNR and a poet, too, joins him as assistant poetry editor, to help with the Parnassian crush. ■

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The gremlin who bit Richard Holbrooke.

Demolition Man

By Ryan Lizza

Last summer, when President Clinton picked Richard Holbrooke to be his new ambassador to the United Nations, Holbrooke's confirmation by the Senate seemed like a virtual formality. After all, even those who don't like Holbrooke's brash style concede that he's one of the Clinton administration's most effective foreign policy hands; and, as a political operator and self-promoter, Holbrooke's talents are legendary. But it won't be until June 17, exactly a year after Clinton announced Holbrooke's selection, that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee finally gets around to holding hearings on Holbrooke's nomination. Which, of course, begs the question: Who could be powerful—and brazen—enough to keep Richard Holbrooke cooling his heels for a year? Surprisingly, the correct answer isn't North Carolina Senator Jesse Helms, the committee chairman who has delayed Holbrooke's hearings. Rather, the man most responsible for putting Holbrooke's nomination in purgatory is one of those Washington gremlins you've probably never heard of but who knows just enough about the system to bring it to a grinding halt: a self-employed foreign affairs consultant named Philip Christenson.

To be sure, Christenson isn't solely responsible for stalling Holbrooke's nomination. He had some help, specifically from an anonymous letter-writer who last July penned a missive to the State Department's inspector general accusing Holbrooke, who was employed by the investment bank Credit Suisse First Boston, of lobbying U.S. ambassadors before the mandatory one-year cooling-off period for former government officials had ended. The letter prompted a wide-ranging investigation by the State Department's I.G. and then by the Justice Department, which in turn prompted Helms to delay hearings on Holbrooke's nomination.

RICHARD HOLBROOKE BY ROB BABBONI

But once the Justice Department wrapped up its investigation, concluding that Holbrooke's contact with the U.S. ambassador to South Korea was inappropriate—for which Holbrooke, in February, agreed to pay $5,000 but admitted no wrongdoing—it looked as if Holbrooke was in the clear. That's when Christenson went to work. First, on March 28, he wrote an op-ed in *The Washington Post* suggesting that Holbrooke violated ethics rules by collecting fees for his speeches and writings related to his official duties as U.S. special envoy to Bosnia, Cyprus, and Kosovo. Christenson urged the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to use Holbrooke's nomination hearings as a chance to review the "ethical minefield" that Holbrooke's status as an unpaid special envoy had created. The article, not surprisingly, sparked yet another investigation by the State Department's I.G.—which, of course, led to another delay in the hearings.

Then, on May 5, just as *The New York Times* was reporting that the inspector general had cleared Holbrooke of any wrongdoing of the kind suggested by Christenson's article, Christenson reared his head again. This time it was in a front-page news story in *The Washington Times*. The story, for which Christenson now admits he was the principal source, accused Holbrooke of twice breaking off tense negotiations in Yugoslavia with Slobodan Milosevic in order to give paid speeches. One speech was reportedly to an electronics firm in New York for $24,000; another was supposedly a private talk to business executives in Athens, Greece, for $16,000. "I think it's unseemly for U.S. diplomats also to engage in private business activities," Christenson sniffed to the *Times*. But the State Department insists that Holbrooke never broke off negotiations to give the speeches. Moreover, the speech in New York never took place, and the speech in Athens was an unpaid commencement address. But the initial furor generated by the article did nothing to help Holbrooke's case on the Hill.

This sort of stuff is nothing new for Christenson. A former foreign service officer, he worked as a staffer for Helms on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in the 1980s. There, former staffers say, Christenson specialized in sinking State Department and ambassadorial appointments Helms didn't like—and, in the process, some say, getting back at the State Department establishment that derailed his foreign service career. With a network of contacts in the Washington bureaucracy,

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Christenson was adept at ferreting out damaging bits of information on nominees. "He decided to get into the politics of personal destruction," says Gerald Connolly, a former senior Democratic foreign relations aide who worked with Christenson. "You know, 'Let's go into someone's personal life and use it to discredit them.' He did it with abandon."

INDEED, SOMETIMES CHRISTENSON may have done it with reckless abandon. Consider the case of Richard Viets. A foreign service officer for 30 years and former ambassador to Tanzania and Jordan, in 1987 Viets was nominated by President Reagan to serve as ambassador to Portugal. But Christenson was able to delay Viets's confirmation for nearly a year over petty ethics charges that were first reported to Christenson by sources within the State Department; Viets ultimately withdrew his nomination.

As Christenson recalls it, Viets was guilty of infractions ranging from lending an employee money to spending too much on embassy alcohol. "He had an official car assigned to his kids," Christenson says with scorn. "The ambassador gets a car. The ambassador's teenage kids *don't* get a car." According to Viets, though, the real story is a bit more complicated. While he was serving as ambassador to Jordan, he says, Palestinian terrorists threatened to kidnap and murder his daughter, who has Down's syndrome. For her protection, she was guarded and became a virtual prisoner in the ambassador's residence. One day, while Viets was away in Washington and the risk to his daughter's life had subsided, the child's nurse asked one of the embassy drivers to take the young girl out for a picnic. Viets failed to reimburse the government for the cost of the drive. He denies the rest of Christenson's charges, too.

Viets was one of the last nominees Christenson directly derailed. That's because, in 1986, Helms pushed through Christenson's plan for a more independent, subpoena-powered inspector general at the State Department. This allowed Christenson or anyone else to simply forward damaging information to the I.G.—just as Holbrooke's anonymous letter-writer did last year.

Christenson maintains that all of his actions have been motivated by his strict sense of ethics and, in Holbrooke's specific case, by his belief that unpaid special envoys should live by the same rules as other State Department officials. "Once you do business in a country as the U.S. envoy, then that country is off limits for any private-sector activities," he says. "You shouldn't be coming into a country and working as a government official, then coming back and working in the private sector." Really? So how to explain Christenson's own trip to Central Africa in 1997? Christenson—who spent much of his government career working on African issues—traveled to what was then Zaire with officials from American Mineral Fields (AMF), a company that had recently secured lucrative mineral contracts with guerrilla leader Laurent Kabila, who was then in the process of deposing President Mobutu Sese Seko. With Christenson on the trip—and on AMF's private plane—were a State Department official and Representative Cynthia McKinney.

Although AMF executives made much of the presence of the U.S. government officials, presumably to legitimize their trip—which was controversial at the time, since Kabila wasn't even in power—Christenson apparently wasn't troubled enough to raise a protest. "The rule is that government employees have to obey government rules," he says, emphasizing that he was a private citizen on the trip.

Perhaps it's ambiguous situations like this one that have awakened Christenson to the nuances of ethics—because he now says that he has no objections to Holbrooke's nomination and, as he tells me, has actually worked to smooth things over between Holbrooke and Christenson's former boss, Helms. In fact, Christenson boasts that he's responsible for Helms's finally going ahead with Holbrooke's hearings.

Or maybe something else prompted Christenson's change of heart: some well-timed flattery. After Christenson's *Washington Post* op-ed appeared, Peter Galbraith, former ambassador to Croatia and a friend of both Christenson's and Holbrooke's, approached Christenson. He facilitated an exchange of letters between Holbrooke and Christenson. Christenson ensured the embattled nominee that his article wasn't motivated by personal animus but instead by his concern over special envoys. Holbrooke wrote Christenson back, thanking him for his "thoughtful letter" and noting the "important matters" Christenson raised—matters "which I would be happy to discuss with you after the completion of the present process." (Holbrooke did not return phone calls asking for comment for this article.)

Whatever it was that changed Christenson's mind on Holbrooke, the change has been profound. Indeed, to listen to Christenson today, you'd think he'd undergone a full-scale conversion. "I don't believe in criminalizing everything," he tells me. "We all make mistakes, and I don't believe that you run around in life trying to destroy people because of a single mistake." No doubt there are a lot of people, Holbrooke among them, who wish Christenson had come to this realization a bit sooner. ■

Kosovo Dispatch

Bittersweet Victory

By PATRICK BISHOP

I HAVE COVERED three liberations in my career: Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands in 1982, Kuwait City in 1991, and now Pristina. The last was the best. As British armor rumbled over the potholed streets of the Kosovo capital, there was a palpable sense of evil being banished. The local Albanian women rose to the occasion, showering the Warrior armored vehicles with roses and weeping tears of joy and relief. Watching these jubilant scenes it was hard to draw any other conclusion than that the

PATRICK BISHOP is associate editor of *The Daily Telegraph*.

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war had been completely justified. And yet there is something that prevents one from breaking into a wholehearted victory jig.

Away from Pristina's main boulevard, very different scenes were taking place. Serbs packed their bags, preparing for a hasty departure. Soon, in all likelihood, most of them will be gone. Kosovo will be more or less ethnically monochrome. Allied victory will have achieved the inverse of what Slobodan Milosevic set out to do; the cultural homogeneity imposed on this unquiet corner of the Balkans will be Albanian rather than Serb.

That is not what the allies intended; they will pretend that is not what has happened. But the reality will become apparent soon enough, as it has in Bosnia, where each of the three main ethnic groups huddle together, at ease only with their own despite the expensive efforts of the international community to get them to at least tolerate their neighbors.

So it is an imperfect victory. That is not to say that the battle should not have been fought. Witnessing the scale of Serb beastliness in Kosovo, it is hard to see how we could have stood by and let them—again—do their worst. A few days ago, my colleagues and I drove up the Drenica valley, scene of some of the worst fighting between the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) and Yugoslav forces. The landscape was utterly empty, save for groups of Serb soldiers sitting on the hulls of their troop trucks, smoking cigarettes as they waited for the order to pull out.

ALEX MAJOLI/MAGNUM PHOTOS

After ten eerie miles, we rounded a bend and came to a group of about 40 Albanian women and children trekking up the road. When we stopped, they recoiled in fear, assuming we were Serbs. On being reassured, they accepted our offer to accompany them to their home village, which they had fled seven weeks earlier after a Serb massacre.

When we got there, we were met by a band of KLA fighters who emerged like curious beasts from the woods. Standing in an oak grove by some recently dug graves, their leader told me the story of the village. The Serbs had been through seven times. Forty-three of the civilian inhabitants had been killed out of a total population of fewer than 1,000. More than 30 men were missing and presumed dead. Many of the houses were destroyed, and the community was scattered among Macedonia, Turkey, and God knows where else. Interestingly, the leader of these fighters had lost only two men. This was a war in which the standard death rate of ten civilians to one soldier reached new and more obscene disproportions.

The story he told was a banal one that echoes what has happened in half the villages in Kosovo. So much destruction in such a small place. Are the Serbs solely to blame? It has been argued that the West's sudden interest in Kosovo made the situation dramatically worse and that, left alone, the Serbs and the Kosovar Albanians might have come to an accommodation.

A peaceful solution to the problem, though, could never be possible as long as Milosevic was around. The Albanians tried it the nice way. Indeed, they showed remarkable patience and fortitude during times when they must have been sorely tempted to turn to violence. That attitude is less a manifestation of saintliness than an indication of the Albanians' capacity for cool analysis and long-term strategic thinking.

The first time I visited Pristina was in 1993, at the height of the Bosnian war. The Kosovar Albanians seemed strangely unmoved by the plight of the Bosnian Muslims, who were on the receiving end of a massive Serb operation to carve out an ethnically pure Greater Serbia. Later, one of the city's many "intellectuals" explained to me over a furtive cup of coffee that the Albanians were biding their time. It could be, he explained, that, if the Serbs succeeded in creating Greater Serbia, it would establish a precedent and lend legitimacy to their own hopes for an independent Kosovo as the starting point for a Greater Albania.

It was not to be. The appeals for patience of Ibrahim Rugova, the nonviolent "president" of the "Republic of Kosova" (recognized only by the Albanians themselves), wore thin. In their stupid, myopic way, the Serbs went on bullying and humiliating the population. By the time the KLA finally took up arms, even the most timid Kosovar was behind it.

The Serbs' war against the KLA "terrorists" was equally heavy-handed, with Serb forces revenging themselves on the civilian population for the sins of the KLA soldiers. The orgy of expulsions and killings that followed the start of the NATO campaign was the final descent into barbarity. Yes, NATO may have triggered the process. But the indications were that it was going to happen sometime, anyway. Belgrade's behavior in the province had long ago wiped out any hope that the

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Kosovars could live peaceably with their Serb neighbors.

Now that the war is over, the Albanians are unlikely to be generous in victory. So far, everyone is behaving in the same, predictable way. The front door of the grim public-housing flat I am staying in (for a sum that would rent a hotel suite in New York City) is bolted and barred by the old Serb couple who live on the ground floor. It is a precaution, they tell me, against Albanian looters—even though the only looting is by Serb soldiers as they ransack Albanian homes for any items of value they overlooked during the occupation. The couple are steeped in their prejudice like a pear in a liqueur bottle. It has become their essence.

Yet they are probably wise to think about moving on. Perhaps not all Albanians hate Serbs. But all Albanians fear them. The consequences for the Serbs will be the same. Even if there is no widespread score-settling, Serbs will be ostracized and discriminated against. Only the infirm, the elderly, and the masochistic will choose to stay. And, of course, the Gypsies can look forward to playing the part of scapegoats, in the absence of the Serbs, for their purported collaboration with the Serbs.

KOSOVO, THEN, LOOKS set to become yet another nationalistic Balkan statelet whose political leaders endlessly reinforce a monolithic cultural identity. This is not what the allies were fighting for. What planning the international community has done for the postwar administration of Kosovo is specifically designed to arrest such a development. Indeed, the jaded view of the neocolonialist international administrators in Sarajevo is that the inhabitants of Kosovo will be treated as delinquent adolescents who will not be allowed anywhere near the levers of power and patronage until they have demonstrated a sense of responsibility. Young men and women in the Office of the High Representative, which oversees the peace there, are reaching for their sun helmets and fly whisks in anticipation of a stint teaching the Kosovo natives what is good for them.

This bracingly Victorian outlook runs counter to the spirit in which the NATO campaign was fought. Yet it is perhaps a more realistic one than the view that has informed the West's blundering interventions in the Balkans to date. Until now, the fundamental assumption was that Balkan folks of whatever stripe would get along just fine if it were not for the manipulations of cynical and opportunistic politicians. And, if they didn't, then they ought to. That thought turns the engines of the Western operation in Bosnia. The evidence, of course, is overwhelmingly to the contrary. The people of the former Yugoslavia coexisted peacefully in the past because their rulers told them to do so. Left to their own devices, they rush for the drab security of their own herd.

This will go down in history as one of the strangest wars ever fought—a conflict in which the winning side escaped without a single battle casualty and in which the driving force was an abstract, humanitarian principle. There is nobility in that motivation, and the allies can take pride in having seen off the biggest bullies on the Balkan block. But the job is still less than half-done. The civilizing mission that the West has set for itself in the region is very far from completion. ■

Kosovo Dispatch

In Control

By STACY SULLIVAN

NOTWITHSTANDING THE EUPHORIA with which the estimated 50,000 Albanians who had remained in the old Turkish-built city of Prizren greeted the first convoy of German peacekeepers arriving on Saturday, June 12, all was not well in Kosovo. Like the Dayton agreement that brought peace to Bosnia, Kosovo's vague peace plan promises different things to different parties to the conflict. To the Belgrade government, the plan means Kosovo will remain an integral part of Yugoslavia. But, to the Albanians, the plan represents a step toward independence. Already the different interpretations are causing problems.

For one thing, the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) has made it clear that it has no intention of giving up its fight for a Kosovar state. After all, the Rambouillet accord, which the KLA signed last March, had left open the possibility of a referendum on independence in three years. And, though the agreement with Slobodan Milosevic that NATO has been sent to implement did not include this option, the guerrillas had not been consulted, let alone included, in the bargaining—so they can justifiably claim not to be bound by it.

Indeed, from the moment the Serbs agreed to the peace plan, the KLA made it clear that it had no intention of giving up its weapons. "The KLA will not attack Serbian forces as they withdraw," said KLA spokesman Jakup Krasniqi shortly after the agreement was announced. "But it is too early to speak about demilitarization. The Serbs must first pay for their crimes." In fact, rather than demilitarization, the KLA seemed to think that NATO is planning to turn the rebel force into a professional army. How would things play out from here? In an attempt to find an answer on that first Saturday of NATO's entry into Kosovo, I followed two German armored personnel carriers twelve miles out of Prizren toward the town of Suva Reka, which KLA fighters had occupied at daybreak. If the events there are any indication of what is to come throughout Kosovo, independence, or at least de facto independence, may not be such a remote possibility.

The bridge leading out of Prizren was camouflaged with trees on its edges and brown and green paint on the pavement—an apparently successful effort by Serb forces to protect it from NATO bombing. Just in front of it was a shot-up, green, Soviet-made sedan. The night before, two Serbian soldiers, drunk on slivovica, or plum brandy, had driven near the German troops to take potshots with their AK-47s. It

STACY SULLIVAN, a consultant at the John F. Kennedy School of Government's Human Rights Initiative at Harvard University, covered the Balkans for *Newsweek*.

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proved a suicide mission. The Germans fired back with overwhelming force, killing them both. The Germans had covered one of the corpses with a piece of camouflage netting. A Serbian tank waving a flag was parked nearby, surrounded by German tanks.

Unlike Prizren, whose picturesque shops and houses were mostly intact despite the fighting around the city, the road leading to Suva Reka gave way to a landscape of torched houses with no roofs. Many were covered in Cyrillic graffiti—a reminder of who was responsible for the damage. Along the side of the road was a convoy of cars and tractors packed full of household items—and angry and tearful Serbs fleeing the NATO "occupation." It would be just a matter of days before all the Serbs in the region would be gone. The part of NATO's mission that entailed the protection of Serbian civilians would be moot.

At the entrance to Suva Reka, a half-dozen guerrillas with broad smiles across their faces manned a checkpoint. The two German military vehicles were waved past, and we were stopped only briefly. "Hello! Good day! You're welcome here," the fighters said. "Kosovo is ours again." Just beyond the checkpoint, there was an abandoned convoy of Yugoslav army trucks with flat tires that had been hit by a rocket. The town itself was completely destroyed, and the only people around were KLA fighters. A seemingly terrified cow and her calf wandered through a bombed-out café where bottles and glasses were melted onto tables. A couple of horses and carts full of refugees coming down from the mountains were on the road, en route to nearby villages. The people were filthy and looked exhausted, but they, too, seemed happy. "The KLA came to us this morning and told us it was safe to go home," said Adem Blace, a father who had his three children in tow.

ALEX MAJOLI/MAGNUM PHOTOS

After driving through more checkpoints manned by soldiers as ebullient as those at the first, we passed a group of KLA soldiers off to the side of the road talking with two jeepfuls of German troops. Judging by the smiles on the faces of both sides, the exchange was friendly. When the Germans pulled away, en route back to Prizren, it was clear they had no intention of disarming the KLA. "Everything seems to be all right in town," one German soldier said. He eyed our license plate, which indicated we had come from Tirana, the Albanian capital. "You've got good plates, so you should be fine."

Just two days earlier, fighting between the KLA and Serbian forces along the Albanian border had been fierce. The Serbs were still shelling KLA positions in the rugged mountains just into Kosovo, and the KLA was firing back and trying to push further into the province. "Nothing has changed at all," explained Linda Muriqi, a 16-year-old girl who joined the KLA in April. "When the peace plan was signed, we were ordered not to shoot unless we were shot at. The Serbs are still shooting, so we're shooting back."

In the Albanian garrison town of Krume, which is just a few miles from the border, several rebel commanders who had just arrived from the front were drinking coffee and smoking cigarettes at the Hotel Jupa, a KLA hangout. Their faces and hands were brown and leathery from the many months spent outside fighting. "We welcome the agreement," said Gani Shehu, the commander of a unit of Albanian-American volunteers called the Atlantic Brigade. But, when asked if his troops would lay down their arms, he laughed. "Of course we won't lay down our arms," he said. "We need them to protect our people."

About 30 miles away, at another mountain base in Padesh, 1,000 new fighters arrived at the front from training camps deep inside Albania. The rebels had been told by NATO not to advance any farther into Kosovo, but they seemed disinclined to obey those orders. The Serbs had bombed their command center a day earlier, and their cook had died in the attack. Jashar Salihu, a KLA supporter who had recently arrived from Switzerland to bring supplies to the rebels, said the KLA would push on. Their strategy was to infiltrate as many fighters as possible into Kosovo to "establish credibility by numbers." In his mind, the peace plan was still murky and the future of the KLA was being decided. The rebels needed a show of force to get the best possible deal they could, he said.

Salihu's strategy may have come to fruition. By late afternoon, the KLA was already arriving in Prizren. Like the NATO forces before them, the rebels were greeted by cheering crowds who covered them in rose petals and took the fighters in their arms. "KLA! KLA!" the crowds chanted. The German troops, who were parked on every corner, just watched as rebel soldiers drove through town, honking their horns. "Kosovo is free! Kosovo is ours!" the rebels shouted back at the crowds. ■

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What Netanyahu almost gave away.

The Road to Damascus

By DANIEL PIPES

THE MOST DRAMATIC moment of the recently completed Israeli election campaign was not a clash between Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his main challenger, Ehud Barak. Rather, it was a TV debate in mid-April between Netanyahu and Yitzhak Mordechai, Netanyahu's own former defense minister who had quit to challenge his old boss on a minor-party ticket. In a discussion of Syria, Netanyahu declared that he would not "give [Syrian President Hafez al-] Assad what Barak is willing to give Assad." Mordechai stunned the Israeli electorate with his dramatic reply. He coldly dared Netanyahu to repeat his claim. "Look me in the eye, Bibi, ... look me in the eye," he demanded. Netanyahu did not repeat his statement.

Just what was Mordechai talking about? Israeli political circles buzzed about the exchange. Then, in late May, government sources gave the Israeli press a sketchy story about back-channel talks between Jerusalem and Damascus during Netanyahu's tenure. Now, however, the full story can be told. Based on information from several sources with first-hand knowledge of the talks, it is clear that, during 1998, Netanyahu became deeply involved in a secret negotiation with Assad over the terms and conditions under which Israel would transfer the Golan Heights, taken from Syria in the 1967 Six Day War, back to Syrian control. Even more astonishing, some of those involved in the talks make the assertion—hotly disputed by Netanyahu and his supporters—that the prime minister, in contrast to both his hard-line image and his promises to supporters, was ready to make big concessions to Assad for a peace agreement from which Israel would get diplomatic recognition, trade, and other attributes of peace.

The American-encouraged negotiating track between Syria and Israel had stalled when Netanyahu came to office in May 1996. Assad insisted that negotiations resume where they had left off with the previous Labor government—namely, at an agreement in principle that Israel return the Golan Heights. Netanyahu saw no reason to concede this in advance. Although both the U.S. government and Israel's Labor Party agreed with Netanyahu on this point, Assad would not budge, and diplomacy shuddered to a halt.

For the next two years, Assad continued to refuse direct or official negotiations, but, in the two-month period of August to September 1998, he did agree to what one high-level Israeli calls "very intensive and very unofficial" talks. These negotiations took place completely outside any governmental framework. Rather, private American citizens went back and forth between the two countries. Ronald Lauder, a New York-based businessman and friend of the prime minister's, along with his aide Allen Roth, forwarded Netanyahu's ideas to Assad. George Nader, publisher of the Washington-based *Middle East Insight*, presented Syrian views. While there may have been other negotiating tracks, this was the only one that Netanyahu saw as possibly leading to a breakthrough; as an aide of his puts it, this was the "most serious and credible channel" because it involved discussions with top officials in both countries.

The Israeli team included Netanyahu; Mordechai; Uzi Arad, the prime minister's diplomatic adviser; and Danny Naveh, the Cabinet secretary. Others involved included Yaakov Amidror, an aide to Mordechai, and Brigadier General Shimon Shappira, military secretary to the prime minister. On the Syrian side, Assad depended primarily on Foreign Minister Faruq ash-Shar and Walid Mualem, his ambassador in Washington.

Syrians and Israelis never had direct contact; instead, the talks took place in classic shuttle-diplomacy style. All told, the Americans visited Damascus nine times, meeting with Assad on each occasion, and made a similar number of trips to Israel. All the participants made great efforts to keep the negotiations secret; for example, the American go-betweens only traveled on their own plane, always stopping in Cyprus between Jerusalem and Damascus. Not even the U.S. government was informed.

But, beyond these basic facts, almost everything about the talks—why they happened in the first place, which side made what concessions, and why nothing came of them—is a matter of contention among the participants. Netanyahu's critics, including some former members of his inner circle, maintain that Netanyahu started the talks for two reasons. First, he feared that the Americans would ram a deal with the Palestinians down his throat (as indeed happened at Wye in October 1998) unless he could produce a deal with Syria. Second, his government was reeling from a succession of crises, domestic and foreign, mostly of its own making. Netanyahu wanted to reestablish himself with a major, world-shaking event. Yet drama on the Egyptian, Jordanian, and Palestinian tracks had been used up; the only neighbors left were Syria and its satrapy, Lebanon. The sight of Netanyahu, the tough-talking Israeli, flying to Damascus to sign a peace treaty with an archenemy would revitalize his prime ministry. A highly favorable world reaction would be accompanied by howls of rage from Netanyahu's own coalition, which would promptly collapse. But the breakthrough with Syria would win Netanyahu a stunning endorsement at the polls and a second term as prime minister.

Netanyahu's critics profess astonishment at the security price they say he was willing to pay Assad in each one of the four main areas under discussion—the extent and the timing of an Israeli withdrawal, demilitarized zones, and early warning stations. Rabin had informally agreed to hand the

DANIEL PIPES is director of the Middle East Forum and the author of three books on Syria, most recently *Syria Beyond the Peace Process* (Washington Institute for Near East Policy).

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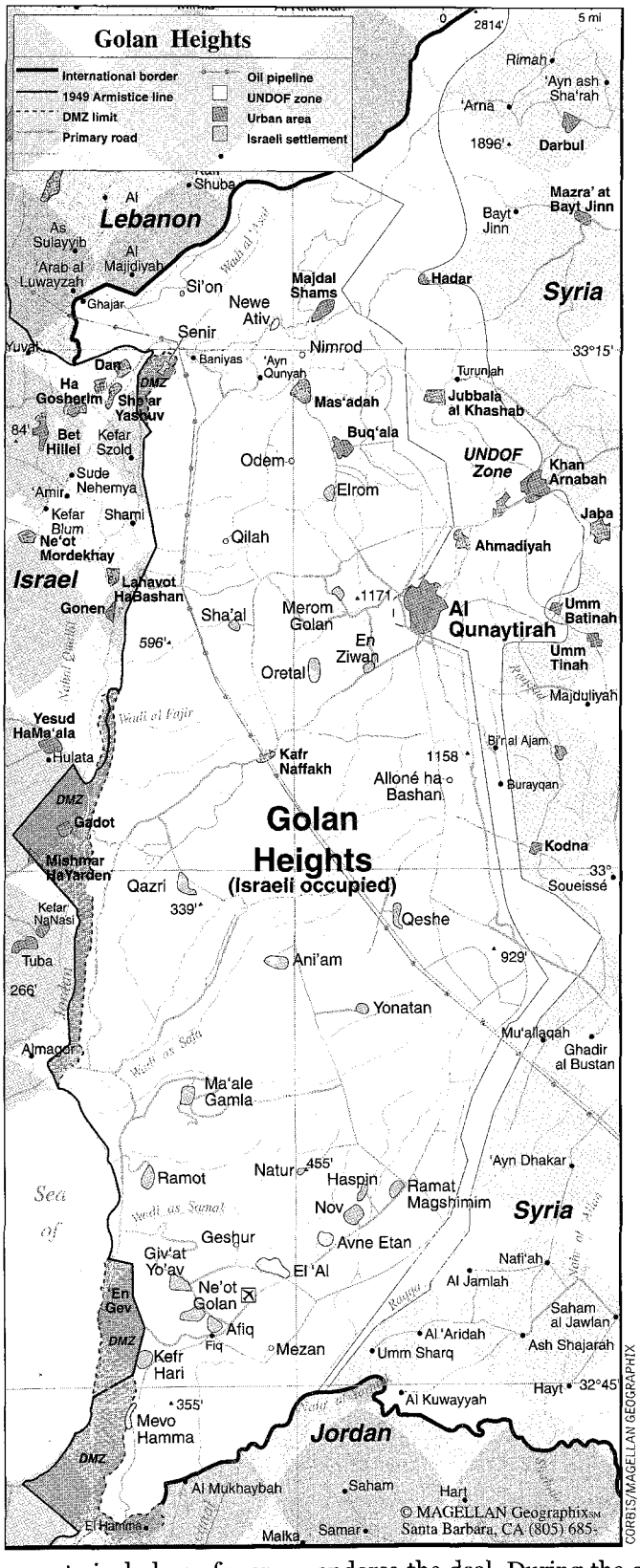
Golan Heights to Syria, pulling Israeli troops back to an international boundary delineated between Syria and Palestine in 1923. Shimon Peres went a step further and, in April 1995, publicly agreed to this line as the border. But neither of these Labor Party prime ministers, condemned as reckless doves by Netanyahu, ever accepted the Syrian demand that Israel go back even farther, to the lines in place on June 4, 1967, before war broke out.

Although the 1967 lines give Syria only 25 additional square miles, they include land with both symbolic and hydraulic significance: were Syria to get them, it would have much greater leverage over the Banyas, Yarmuk, and Jordan rivers, as well as Lake Tiberias—or nearly half of Israel's water supplies. Sources critical of Netanyahu say he began the talks by picking up where his Labor predecessors left off: Israel would return the territory on the Golan, accepting the international border but not the cease-fire lines. Yet, faced with Assad's steadfast rejection of these terms, he capitulated and, in a stunning reversal, agreed that Israel would, indeed, return to the 1967 lines. Second, having initially demanded that the Israeli withdrawal take place over a ten- to 15-year period, he ultimately settled on 16 to 24 months. "The years kept flying by real fast," notes one Netanyahu confidant.



To prevent a repetition of the surprise attack from Syria in 1973, Netanyahu demanded an extensive demilitarization of Syrian territory near the Golan and an early warning station. This was to include no fewer than three demilitarized zones in Syria: the one closest to Israel completely empty of troops, a second with only lightly armed troops, and the third with troops bearing only defensive weapons, aides say. The third of these zones would extend well beyond Damascus, a prospect that upset the Syrians more than anything else. According to the critics, Assad simply refused the suggestion, insisting that Israel would never determine how many troops he would deploy around his capital city. Netanyahu backed off on this point, too; by the end of the negotiations, a "semi-agreement" lacking specifics was reached that each side would somewhat demilitarize a single zone ten kilometers wide along its border.

As for the final issue, Netanyahu demanded that Israel maintain in perpetuity a high-tech early warning station atop Mount Hermon, the 9,000-foot mountain that dominates the Syrian-Israeli border. When Assad balked at this, Netanyahu was said to have offered Assad a deal under which the two sides would share control over the warning station. No, again, Assad said—though he did agree to a U.N. team manning the station. If "United Nations" meant U.S. and French nationals, Netanyahu said, he could accept it. There the matter was left, with Israelis looking at the prospect of access only to the information that the American or French governments wished them to have.

If Netanyahu was willing to give so much, why, in the end, was there no deal? His critics say it was not because he had any reservations about these terms—he was eager to sign—but because he personally lacked the credibility to make such far-reaching concessions that so starkly contradicted the principles of both his party and Cabinet. He needed a defense heavyweight to endorse the deal. During the active period of negotiations, that would have to have been Mordechai, an ex-general. Netanyahu twisted Mordechai's arm, but Mordechai would not (in his words) "jeopardize Israel's security." Mordechai's reluctance, one close observer told me, "frustrated the hell out of Bibi." So, when Ariel Sharon was appointed foreign minister on October 9, 1998, Netanyahu asked for his blessing. Sharon also balked. Lacking an endorsement from Mordechai or Sharon, Netanyahu could not go it alone. As a

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result, the agreement was stillborn.

A Netanyahu supporter calls all of this "the opposite of the truth" and "an effort to rewrite history." The Netanyahu camp insists that his political ambitions had nothing to do with the talks. Rather, they say, Netanyahu signaled the Syrians shortly upon taking office that he wanted to talk but that he needed more security concessions than Labor had required. In 1997, he sent what an aide characterizes as a "barrage of messages" to Damascus to reinforce this point. The talks began in mid-'98, when an emissary came from Damascus to Israel saying that Assad was ready.

While Netanyahu's camp concedes that he did show flexibility on the issue of a timetable for Israeli withdrawal, it insists that he took a hard line on the three other issues. According to Netanyahu and his aides, the Syrians time and again demanded that Israel accept the 1967 borders but Netanyahu said no. Until it was clear where and how the Syrian military forces would redeploy, he insisted, Israel could not commit itself to specific lines. "Never" did he agree to a borderline, an aide says.

Netanyahu supporters say Assad accepted the idea of three demilitarized zones but wanted them to be less than ten kilometers wide. Netanyahu said no, and the Syrians acknowledged the need to make them wider. At that point, the talks broke off. As for a high-tech listening and watching post on Mount Hermon, Assad balked at this but did concede that Israelis would remain on the Golan Heights for some years. Netanyahu aides uniformly characterize this as "progress."

Indeed, Netanyahu's supporters claim much was achieved from Israel's point of view, despite the ultimate collapse of the talks. They say Netanyahu forced Assad to improve his offer over what he had given the Labor Party on such matters; thus the talks leave his successor, Barak, in an enhanced position. There was no deal on his watch, Netanyahu told his Cabinet recently, because "Israel did not consent to Syria's territorial demands."

The Netanyahu faction seems especially incensed at the claim that Netanyahu was willing to cut a deal but had to be stopped by Mordechai and Sharon. Uzi Arad, for example, says flatly that "Mordechai supported Netanyahu's position." Admittedly, he was "slow in acting but at no point opposed." As for Sharon, one participant says, he did effectively block the deal by not pursuing it—perhaps because it was not his own idea.

NETANYAHU'S CRITICS CONTEND that things really ended much earlier, when Mordechai and Arad were tasked with drawing up a map to give to the Syrians but Mordechai stopped the process by never providing one. The negotiations "died because no map was produced," says a critic. For their parts, both Mordechai and Sharon have lent credence to the critics by publicly confirming their role in stopping the deal. Mordechai declared in his TV debate with Netanyahu: "More than once ... I acted as a responsible defense minister of this country and prevented what had to be prevented. You know things would have looked very different otherwise." *Ha'aretz* reports that Sharon "told fellow Likud members ... that he torpedoed the third-party efforts with Syria." It also quotes "government sources" saying that, when Sharon learned about the talks in September 1998, he confronted Netanyahu and said there was "not enough of a basis for Israel to put forward any withdrawal map."

Other circumstantial factors seem to support the critics' case. For all its emphatic certainty, the Netanyahu camp has seemed inconsistent and devious ever since Mordechai's "look me in the eye" challenge. For example, right after that dramatic confrontation, a senior official at the prime minister's office announced that "Mordechai does not know anything about" the talks between Jerusalem and Damascus—a clearly preposterous claim that even other pro-Netanyahu types have contradicted. One of them told me, for example, that Mordechai was "in the picture throughout."

And, while Netanyahu called Sharon's claim to have "torpedoed" the talks "nonsense" and "a false charge," the only support he offered for this statement was the legalistic and irrelevant point that Sharon "was appointed foreign minister only after the secret contacts ended." Netanyahu's argument also begs the question: If the prime minister was not doing anything contrary to his own party platform, why does he now claim to have kept the negotiations a complete secret from even his defense and foreign ministers?

ANYONE WHO HAS followed Netanyahu's career will instantly recognize in this episode the man's well-established pattern of speaking loudly but carrying a small stick. For example, Netanyahu's trademark issue throughout his career was a policy of tough antiterrorism—he founded an institute dedicated to this goal, wrote a book on the topic, and made it the subject of innumerable public appearances. But, when the U.S. government offered to extradite to Israel a suspected Hamas terrorist, Musa Abu Marzook, Netanyahu took a bye (seemingly scared of the trouble this would cause). Abu Marzook now lives as a free man and a high Hamas official in Amman, Jordan.

Thus does the evidence point heavily to the unhappy likelihood that Netanyahu's version is not true. More precisely, he appears to be boasting of his earlier, tougher positions with the Syrians but hiding the concessions he made as the talks went on. In fact, Netanyahu gave more to the Syrians than did either of the predecessors he so deeply scorns, Yitzhak Rabin and Shimon Peres. And, judging by new reports coming out of Israel, he also gave away more than Barak would.

This extraordinary episode reveals nothing new about the Syrian side, which merely confirmed its well-established pattern, going back 25 years, of attempting to draw maximum leverage from a position of weakness. As in the past, Assad gave the absolute minimum in negotiations and doled out concessions in the slowest and most incremental manner.

But the story of the secret Netanyahu-Assad channel has important implications in two areas: Israeli politics and the future of Syrian-Israeli relations. The negotiations reveal that Netanyahu is a leader who would do almost anything for power. And, if Assad now demands that Barak start where Netanyahu left off, Netanyahu's having discussed vast concessions to Damascus will weaken the negotiating position of his successor. Advantage, Syria. ■

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Candidates' consultants create the customized campaign.

Virtual Politics

By DANA MILBANK

CINCINNATI

IN A DARK BASEMENT somewhere beneath downtown Cincinnati, Rick Segal presents the attack plan. "The fact of the matter is *it's war*," he is telling a group of followers, who scribble notes. "It's a black-and-white world of wins and losses." He flashes war-movie clips on the screen and discusses the techniques of today's smartest warriors: Hamas, the Mexican Zapatistas, Asian triads, and other amorphous, stealthy networks. "Bastions, redoubts, and empires are subject to implosive attacks and ambush," Comrade Segal tells his men. Quoting from a Pentagon report, he adds: "In an information-age 'battlespace,' massed forces will simply form juicy targets for small, smart attackers."

The scene might prompt an eavesdropper to call the FBI if the basement weren't a conference room in the posh Queen City Club, if the attendees weren't a bunch of corporate suits, and if Segal weren't sporting a polka-dotted bow tie beneath his chin. In fact, Segal, the head of a local marketing firm, is talking about network warfare, or "netwar," and, done his way, it involves no bloodshed. As the world advances beyond the industrial age of mass production, he believes, small and nimble enterprises can use technology to leave their larger, slower competitors in the dust. The concept isn't unusual in business circles; what's strange is Segal's latest client, the man who introduced Segal's war-games speech: Malcolm S. Forbes Jr., long-shot presidential candidate. Segal, using the same high-tech methods he employs to sell refrigerators, flooring, and telecom services, believes he can help Steve Forbes launch a guerrilla attack on the massed forces of George W. Bush.

The Forbes netwar, an effort to wrest the Republican presidential nomination from the favorite in 2000, is an opening salvo in what will be the first presidential campaign of the information age. Forbes is calculating that technology will redefine political campaigns in 2000 much as television did in the late '50s and early '60s—and he isn't alone in this forecast. The Gore campaign and both national political parties are making similar assumptions in their 2000 strategies. Why? For one, 76 million Americans are online already, according to the Nielsen ratings, and 70 percent of voting-age Americans will have Internet access by Election Day, according to a survey by Dataquest. At this time in the '96 campaign, only eleven percent of Iowa Republican caucus-goers and only 14 percent of New Hampshire Republican primary voters were online, according to Forbes's internal polls; now some 57 percent of Republican caucus voters in Iowa and 68 percent of primary voters in New Hampshire have computers—and most use the Internet regularly.

But the Web is just the beginning. At the same time, vastly expanded consumer databases and enhanced computing power have put an unprecedented amount of information at the candidates' fingertips. If you're a registered voter, chances are the candidates know not just your name, address, and voting history but also your age and the age of your children, whether you smoke cigars, where you shop, where you attend church, what kind of car you drive, how old it is, whether you're on a diet, and what type of pet you have—to cite just a few examples. Using artificial intelligence and an array of new software programs, campaigns can then target and contact their likeliest supporters with unprecedented precision. The trend is further aided by the replacement of the giant national TV networks with cable, independent stations, and local news, which allows political spots to be targeted right down to a few hundred voters. In California, for example, there are some 180 cable systems from which a candidate can choose.

Many of the newfangled techniques are still too expensive for most campaigns. But, for Forbes, a wealthy publisher willing to spend some $50 million on the primaries, these new technologies are crucial. Forbes launched his campaign over the Internet and uses the Web to do advertising and sponsorships. He created an organizing tool called the "e-Precinct," which encourages participants to enroll friends, forming "e-Blocks," "e-Neighborhoods," and even an "e-National Committee." On June 16, he held a virtual fundraiser in which participants had a private, online group chat with Forbes—after making a $10 credit card contribution. And, later in the campaign, Forbes will speak live, his image broadcast on the Internet, to a town-hall meeting in New Hampshire while he has a half hour of downtime in Iowa. Just as Clinton pioneered the rapid response in the 1992 campaign, the Internet allows Forbes 24-hour interaction, unfiltered by the news media.

Though the Forbes camp won't say what it spends on its online campaign (aides insist it's less than the $500,000 that industry experts have estimated), it's enough to fund five staffers full-time for the website alone. The website, which began at 670 pages and has expanded to include "photoscopes" with digital images, is easily the largest of all the candidates' sites. Technology is also shifting Forbes away from conventional polls to "database surveys." Rather than pose 50 questions to 300 randomly selected people, pollsters pose a few questions to thousands of people found on consumer-marketing databases. Forbes pollsters then do a computer analysis of dozens of personal characteristics—including age,

GENE GRIEF

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family structure, consumer habits, home ownership, and magazine subscriptions—to figure out whether you will vote, how susceptible you are to persuasion, and what pitch will appeal to you most. Already the Forbes campaign is running targeted 2000 ads, using such vehicles as the History Channel, tailored to cable systems in early primary states. "We've gone from mass media to demassified media," says John McLaughlin, Forbes's pollster and media strategist. "People are overloaded with information. If you don't talk to them directly, they're going to lose interest." Campaign manager Bill Dal Col says this changes the whole nature of campaigns. "You don't have to shotgun anymore," he says. "You can now bullet."

What all these techniques have in common is an effort to establish a personal, one-on-one relationship between the campaign and each supporter based on the supporter's preferences. Call it the Customized Campaign. Instead of mass media and mass marketing, it's about individual interaction and personalized politics, fostered by technology. Instead of the old demographics, campaigns now are getting inside voters' heads to track "psychographics."

The Bush campaign, though it is weighing using an artificial-intelligence method to predict voter turnout in one early primary state, otherwise appears to be ceding the high-tech campaign to Forbes. Bush has spent only $15,000 on his website. Of course, Bush is currently leading the polls with the support of 54 percent of Republican primary voters, while Forbes can boast of the support of six percent. "A lot of that is, frankly, overrated," Karl Rove, a top Bush adviser, says of Forbes's computer techniques. "It's just a matter of sifting through the voter files." David Beckwith, who is overseeing Bush's website, figures Forbes's high-tech advantage won't be decisive. "I can't disagree that with extraordinary resources an electronic campaign can get an extra few points," he says, "but he's not going to be in the zone."

Others, however, will be in the zone even if Forbes isn't. "Forbes is one of our models," says new Democratic National Committee Chairman Joe Andrew. Andrew, who took over Indiana's Democratic Party after its '94 wipeout, created a "coordinated campaign" that employed technology and micro-targeting. In the next two elections, Indiana elected more new Democratic officeholders than in any year since 1932. Evan Bayh won a landslide victory in the Senate race, while other Democrats invaded local GOP strongholds (a black sheriff was elected in a county known for racial tension). And Democratic gubernatorial candidate Frank

Take This Wife, Please

IMAGINE, FOR A moment, that Lamar Alexander wins the presidency in 2000 (come on, you can do it). He serves two terms, emasculates the Washington-bureaucrats-who-think-they-know-how-to-run-your-community-better-than-you-do, or whatever, and retires to Tennessee. Why on earth wouldn't his wife, Leslee "Honey" Alexander, then run for office herself? After all, she's at least as educated and capable as he is. A Smith graduate, she met Lamar when she slid into him at a Senate softball game (she was working for John Tower and he for Howard Baker). She's been vice chairwoman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and a member of the Southern Regional Task Force on Infant Mortality, and she founded a successful child care company. If Hillary can do it, why not Honey?

And that's the problem. Clinton's jaunt from first lady to Senate candidate is glamorous and fun—perfect for a time when politics-as-entertainment is the only form of politics that anyone seems interested in. But it may augur a bigger change than we now grasp. America is just learning how potent a launching pad the first ladyship is. Sure, you have the baggage of your husband's presidency and that tedious balancing act between seeming loyal and forging your own identity. But vice presidents have that as well. And being first lady doesn't diminish you in the way being veep does (not politically, anyway). First ladies have all the benefits of veeps' proximity to power—high visibility, easy access to the best fund-raisers and advisers—but also some of the above-politics star quality that attends a general or a sports hero. Once Hillary Clinton started making noises about running, all the other potential Democratic Senate contenders began looking like dwarves. And, if Clinton wins, she will zoom to the front of the post-Gore Democratic presidential pack. What well-educated, ambitious, career-minded first lady wouldn't take a shot?

Of course, well-educated, ambitious, career-minded first ladies are a new phenomenon. And that's why no one thought much about the job's political potential before Hillary Clinton came along. As McGill University's Gil Troy points out, she is the first first lady with an advanced degree (Barbara Bush, Rosalyn Carter, and Betty Ford didn't even graduate from college). And, with the exception of Nancy Reagan, who worked as an actress, and perhaps Betty Ford, who worked as a model, she is the first to have had an independent pre-White House career. These changes have been controversial, and culturally flustering, but they will not be for much longer. More and more, the First Marriage will approximate overclass coupledom in general: two hard-driving professionals educated in the same way (often at the same place) and raised with similar expectations. And, given that, it's not hard to envision the first-lady candidate becoming a fixture of American politics.

Take a look at the spouses of the 1996 and 2000 presidential contenders. To be sure, homemaker Sabina Forbes and librarian Laura Welch Bush aren't likely to throw their hats into the ring. But, in nearly half the cases, it's thinkable. In addition to Alexander, there is Marilyn Quayle, a partner at a high-powered Indianapolis law firm and a former board member of the Federal Emergency Management Agency. As for the '96 candidates' wives, Wendy Lee Gramm, a Ph.D. economist, worked at the Federal Trade Commission and the Office of Management and Budget before chairing the Commodity Futures Trading Commission. Joan Levy Specter sat on the Philadelphia City Council for 16 years. Elizabeth Dole, of course, hasn't relied on her husband's election to launch her own campaign. But, if he had won in 1996,

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O'Bannon, who badly trailed Indianapolis Mayor Stephen Goldsmith in the polls, beat the Republican on Election Day. What's the secret? "Customize, customize, customize," Andrew says.

Just as O'Bannon used new technology to beat Goldsmith (who is now Bush's policy adviser), Andrew believes, Democrats will use technology to defeat Bush and the Republican House and Senate candidates in 2000. The DNC chairman argues that, with the breakdown of neighborhoods, civil society, and the old ward and precinct system, a politics based on geography has been replaced by a politics of shared interests. "All politics is local, but local has been redefined," he says. Now people will associate with fellow gardeners or car enthusiasts wherever they are, often through the Internet. That's why Andrew, in Indiana, blended the state's voter files with data about age, race, income, religion, magazine subscriptions, and the like to build detailed information on all voters. He gave CD-ROM disks with that information to local organizers, who used it for calls, mailings, and door-to-door canvassing, enhancing the database with new, more personal information along the way. That personal touch helped Democrats boost turnout, a technique that "will be huge in 2000," Andrew vows. "There are 50 counties in America who may determine who's the next president," he says. And, by targeting individuals in each of those counties with coordinated, personalized mail, e-mail, calls, and visits, the Democrats will win the White House, he thinks.

Nobody is quite as fascinated with this possibility as Al Gore, who checks his campaign website a couple of times a day and phones in suggestions for changes. Gore, of course, represents precisely the kind of massed force Forbes's people are hoping to use their new technology to defeat. But Gore seems to believe that there's no reason why he can't combine technology with a conventional campaign. With that goal in mind, Gore brought Andrew to the DNC to reproduce the Indiana experiment nationally. Gore has also hired some of the leading Democratic technologists, such as Hal Malchow, a direct-mail specialist; pollsters Mark Mellman and Mark Penn; Laura Quinn, a satellite-communications specialist; and policy adviser Elaine Kamarck, who just edited a book titled *democracy.com?: Governance in a Networked World.*

Malchow, a sort of mad political scientist, pushes the boundaries of technology with "Chi-Square Automatic Interaction Detection," or CHAID analysis, which he believes improves on conventional polling. Instead of using small samples and guesswork, this software can use mounds of

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it's likely that she, not Clinton, would have become the first first lady to use the White House as stepping stone to elective office.

This might not seem like such a bad thing. Given the patriarchy that runs through American politics, the first-lady-candidate model could give women new hope, the chance for an end run around entrenched old boys' networks. That's certainly how it functions in South Asia, where women have won the highest offices in four of the most sexist countries on earth because of the emotional and logistical advantages of political wifedom (or daughterdom).

But, when you think of highly effective democracies, you don't exactly think of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, or Sri Lanka. In fact, we generally associate dynasticism with political systems in decay. The repeated reelection of members of the same family suggests either that the parties nominating them can't rouse their supporters ideologically or that the entire political system has erected barriers that exclude talented people from modest, anonymous backgrounds. In the United States, the former may be a problem, and the latter certainly is. The extraordinary cost of American presidential campaigns, for instance, offers a tremendous advantage to candidates like George W. Bush who inherit a network of donors.

In fact, the prospect of a Bush-Gore race is already leading commentators to worry out loud about the presence, in an era of supposed hyper-meritocracy, of so many second- and third-generation candidates. It's time to connect that worry to Hillary Clinton. Father-son successions at least take time to develop, giving others a chance in the interval—and giving the sons a chance to prove themselves in lesser offices. Husband-wife successions, by contrast, are nearly instantaneous. Put them together, and you could clog up American politics for decades on end.

To avoid that, we need to rethink the job of first lady. For better or worse, Hillary Clinton has politicized it in ways that cannot be permanently reversed. A return to the Barbara Bush era is impractical, and, in an era in which so many women value their careers, it's insulting. The best way forward may be to push Hillaryism to its logical conclusion: embrace the idea of presidential spouses as political actors, but force them to be independent ones. In other words, as Germaine Greer suggested in these pages four years ago, abolish the institution of the first lady altogether. Encourage presidential spouses to work (as Elizabeth Dole said she would if Bob won), let them spout off about whatever they want, but don't give them a government-funded staff to protect them when they do. Let professionals handle the menu selection and seating arrangements at state dinners; presidential wives (or husbands) shouldn't even have to attend. At the same time, don't ever let anyone do what Hillary Clinton did with health care: there should be no official government work for first spouses. The flip side of an independent professional identity, and independent opinions, must be an absence from White House policymaking.

Of course, presidential spouses will still have some advantages if they run for office. But at least the public will be accustomed to seeing them as political actors with their own accomplishments, or lack thereof. They will lose some of the apolitical, monarchical aura that lets them tower over mere politicians, as well as the public money that has allowed Clinton to begin her New York campaign under the guise of performing the duties of the first ladyship. If this happens, perhaps marrying an ambitious, young male politician will become a less attractive route for women who eventually hope to wield power themselves—leading more female would-be politicians to cut out the middleman. Think how much grief the young Hillary Rodham could have saved herself had she had that option all those years ago.

PETER BEINART

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empirical data to predict the juiciest fund-raising targets, the easiest voters to persuade, and the likeliest to vote. Rather than extensively interviewing a few hundred people from random phone lists, Malchow employs a shorter "minipoll" of up to 10,000 people. He then mixes the results with voter lists, census data, and consumer lists, and the computer determines which combination of variables (message and demographics) will deliver the best results (votes). Using the technology in Ron Wyden's 1998 Senate race in Oregon, Malchow found that young independents in high-education neighborhoods with high Asian American populations would be particularly open to Wyden. A poll couldn't have found that odd fact because the samples are too small.

Soon Gore's techies will be venturing further into weird science. Malchow talks about "neural nets," an artificial-intelligence software program that can make predictions based on patterns among multiple variables that computers can recognize but traditional regression analysis can't. It can determine to what degree a voter's opinion has to do with gender, region, voting history, and other variables. Malchow also talks about "genetic algorithms," in which a computer finds the strongest links among a large number of variables by "breeding" variables to find the "fittest" combinations in a Darwinian game. It's far-out, but when Malchow made his presentation to the Gore campaign, the vice president himself showed up. "He eats this stuff up," Malchow says.

GORE'S DEMOCRATIC CHALLENGER, Bill Bradley, is no Luddite himself. Bradley has been out front in online fund-raising, leading the attempt to get regulators to accept Internet credit card contributions for matching funds. Bradley has also been using the Internet to register voters. His staffers are handling some 800 e-mail queries a day, and they planned a June trip to California in consultation with his 1,500 Internet supporters in the state.

On the Republican side, Tom Cole, chief of staff to the Republican National Committee chairman, vows not to be outdone by the DNC. "We think this is akin to what television was in the 1950s," Cole says. Aristotle Publishing, a nonpartisan political technology company with strong ties to Republicans, has been working with America Online to create political banner ads that appear only on the screens of those computer users campaigns wish to reach. The company also produces software that manages every aspect of a campaign, merging constituent-service data with fund-raising information. Aristotle predicts that five to ten percent of campaign money will be raised through the Internet in 2000 and as much as 80 percent in the 2004 election. That's self-serving, perhaps. But with five presidential candidates using its software, Aristotle isn't alone in its expectations.

Both John Kasich and Pat Buchanan are using sophisticated electronic campaigns to try to knock Bush down. Kasich, who styles himself as the JFK of the information age, has enlisted Mark Kvamme, the chairman of USWeb/CKS, to run his e-campaign. Kvamme has customized the Kasich website so that voters from Iowa, New Hampshire, and Ohio will see different pages when they log in. A "Who's Your Hero?" interactive page on the Kasich site received more than 1,000 nominations in its first few weeks. Win or lose, Kasich will use the names and personal data he gathers in the future.

Buchanan, meanwhile, has reactivated his "Buchanan Brigade" from the '96 campaign. The Brigade has tens of thousands of names, and, in between campaigns, webmaster Linda Muller ("I'm the Brigade mom") used the list for other purposes, such as stopping a plan in Alabama to fingerprint driver's license applicants.

THESE TECHNOLOGIES, THOUGH new to politics, have been developing in the private sector for the past decade, and many of them are already common in the world of electronic commerce. In business, mass customization is replacing mass production, while "one-on-one marketing" is replacing mass marketing. The tools of the trade are vast databases that keep tabs on some 180 million American consumers. Data businesses such as the Polk Company and Acxiom Corporation amass information from warranty cards, motor vehicle records, and millions of consumer lists, allowing them to identify when you bought your car, what your hobbies are, whether you have a hunting license, what type of work you do, whether you own a boat or an RV, what your ethnicity is, what type of block you live on, what kinds of exercise you do, whether you collect stamps or take photographs, and whether you drink wine or gamble.

Politicians began to join the technology game in the 1980s, when the parties began to put state and local voter lists, which had been compiled by hand, into computer databases. But electronic profiling and targeting wasn't sophisticated enough (or cheap enough) to be of much value, and it wasn't until the '96 election that some campaigns began to dabble in artificial intelligence. The Internet became a factor for the first time in '98, when it played a role in Jesse Ventura's gubernatorial victory in Minnesota. Ventura's website wasn't flashy (it cost just $600), but he used it to organize volunteers, to fund-raise, to sell the wrestler's action figures, and to act as an interactive billboard for supporters. The JesseNet e-mail list is now up to 7,000 members.

Now, political consultants are finding new uses for the enhanced information. Paula Kowalczuk, a Democratic consultant, mixes government and private data and then divides voters and their neighborhoods into one of 62 categories, or "lifestyle clusters," including "Deer Hunter," "Gen X," and "Lower Bohemia." Campaigns can then target their messages accordingly. Similarly, Roger Lee, a direct-mail consultant, uses data and technology to divide voters into 120 ethnic categories (only about ten categories were possible in '96). Computers can decide whether a Hispanic voter should get a brochure in English, Spanish, or both.

The consumer information also allows campaigns to target their advertising more precisely, a necessity because of the fragmenting nature of TV and radio audiences. Ten or 15 years ago, the three big broadcast networks could reach 80 to 85 percent of voters, but that number has fallen to about 55 percent, says David Dixon, a Democratic media strategist. Instead, cable television now presents three-quarters of Americans with an average of 30 channels each, and several channels allow candidates to advertise on individual cable

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systems (some reaching as few as 5,000 households). Campaigns can reach older white men in one city with CNN while reaching black voters in another city with BET. Equally important, says Jon Hutchens, a Denver-based media buyer, is the proliferation of new networks such as Fox, UPN, Warner Brothers, and Pax TV.

Like it or not, the new political technologies are here to stay. Whether that's a good thing is the subject of some debate. Though it has the potential to reverse voter apathy, it might further disenfranchise the poor. Though it could limit the power of special interest groups, it might also cause presidential candidates to pander to more and more people, as if they were running for city council. "This is pretty scary to me," says Martha Rogers, whose books *The One to One Future* and *Enterprise One to One* have helped to spread the mass-customization idea through corporate America. "A politician can make me one promise and you one promise, and his competitor wouldn't even know it."

Candidates, of course, insist they won't deliver conflicting messages, though they agree the process is hard to monitor. Forbes aides argue that the e-campaign makes Americans feel more involved. Technology, though it can alienate, might also revive a Tocquevillian America, in which civic groups thrive online. "We're reconstructing the old-fashioned ward and precinct system," Segal says. "I may not be the first person to invent a political machine, but I may be the first to create a political machine that's really a machine."

One mailing the campaign already sent enclosed a survey on various issues—missile defense, the United Nations, term limits, morality, and others. If somebody scribbles a line about tax reform, the campaign will later personalize a form letter with a postscript from Forbes, saying, "Thanks for writing me about that tax issue last month. I put it in one of my speeches." That's a simple way to create a personal touch.

OTHERS WORRY THAT e-campaigns will invade individual privacy, a danger when there's so much personal information for sale. Campaigns are taking some measures to reassure the public. Forbes's campaign, for example, says it won't use "cookies" or other devices to collect information about visitors to the site without their permission. Other campaigns say they won't send "spam," or unsolicited e-mail.

Segal says the Forbes campaign *will* send unsolicited e-mails to potential voters who meet the Forbes profile, but, to avoid complaints, the campaign will try not to send more than one unsolicited e-mail to each prospect. A more obvious way to avoid the privacy problem is to use information people supply themselves. Segal eventually will send up to eight e-mails per day with messages written according to the recipient's preferences. The website is gathering such preferences at every turn, requesting information about job, income, education, fraternity, and civic groups. "What's important to you?" the website asks at various points, offering 49 choices that cover everything from school prayer to Kosovo, crime to Y2K.

Often, those who are individually targeted won't even know it; they'll just see their junk mail as more relevant. In '97, while working for the Republican gubernatorial candidate in Virginia, McLaughlin, Forbes's pollster, singled out upper-income professionals in Northern Virginia for a pitch on lowering the state's car tax. The campaign similarly delivered a pitch to mothers of school-age children about hiring 4,000 new teachers, while in rural southern Virginia it sent a tailored tobacco message to every tobacco farmer.

THE PRIVACY AND democracy problems will become more pressing as the technology becomes more pervasive. For now, the debate will be about the merits of the technologies themselves. Though few doubt that they work, some doubt whether they work well enough to justify the cost. Some political commentators have proclaimed e-campaigns overblown, arguing that campaigns won't be able to reach enough of the voters they need via the Internet and that people don't go to the Internet for politics.

However, those who dismiss the Internet's role often assume e-campaigns are just about websites, which, in truth, are little more than electronic yard signs. The Internet is just a means of gathering and organizing information, and e-mail is just one way to deliver highly targeted messages. The point of e-campaigning is to use the information gathered through the Internet in order to better target people, not just through e-mail but through more traditional means, such as mail, phone calls, television, and door-to-door visits. And the Forbes campaign's techniques are already showing some promise in that regard: a recent review of the campaign's phone calls to potential supporters in an early primary state showed that, because of targeting, the calls had had an unusually high success rate of 20 percent.

The Forbes campaign is also working on new ways to attract those who wouldn't ordinarily surf the Web or seek out political sites. Forbes's Internet banner ads, which are already in use, will eventually be custom-delivered using Internet service providers' customer profiles so that the ads only appear on the screens of those people the campaign wants to reach—say, registered Republicans who live in Iowa.

More significant, though, is the use of Steve Forbes "pavilions" on popular websites. Segal pictures a "constellation of websites" linking voters to Forbes. Doctors for Forbes, Teachers for Forbes, North Dakotans for Forbes, and the like will use virtual bumper stickers that link viewers to the Forbes site. And such sponsorships face fewer legal restrictions than TV ads. Among the results of all these efforts: In its first six weeks, Forbes2000.com enrolled 12,720 volunteers and 1,620 e-Precinct leaders while racking up 20.3 million hits in 377,000 separate visits to the site.

Forbes advisers are the first to admit that all this won't be enough to win the nomination by itself. If the race isn't close, e-politics won't do much good. But, if Forbes's $50 million can somehow get him close to Bush, his futuristic campaign might make a difference. "Since 1952, most Republican presidential candidates have approached campaigns like Eisenhower: mass the troops," says Segal. Bush's advisers "are going to be tempted into the security of the last playbook, what happened last time." And, in the information age, the old playbook may be no match for a couple of guerrillas with laptops. ■

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THE NEW REPUBLIC

Stanley Kauffmann on Films

Matters of Fact

WHAT A PLEASURE to announce the return of a brand new event. Here is the Human Rights Watch International Film Festival again—the tenth such festival—with a bill of thirty-three films from all over the world. Human Rights Watch is by now a widely known institution "dedicated to protecting" those rights everywhere in every way possible. Annually, the group also selects a bill of films, non-fiction and fiction, features and shorter films, that relate in some way to its mission. Quickly I add that, insofar as I have been able to sample, they are not missionary pictures. Whoever selects the films—we're not told—understands that, foremost, they must be interesting.

I have seen five of this year's list—two features, two 50-minute films, and one short—and again I indulge my regret that the name of the festival must be (obviously must be) what it is: because, to judge by my annual samplings, the HRW pictures provide non-didactic, absorbing *film* experiences.

They also provide something else. These are strictured days in the international film world, strapped by expenses that are swollen far beyond profligacy; and therefore filmmaking, even more than in its past, is aimed—in every country—at the largest possible audience. All of us are members of that audience, sometimes with great enjoyment, but some of us are also members of an elitist audience. (Yes, elitist. If that word has, through misuse, become a taunt, refresh yourself with a dictionary.) That sector of our taste, the larger sector for this group, suffers these days from malnutrition—worse, from discouragement. During any year, we can occasionally see films from various countries—certainly including the U.S.—that rightly demand something from us and repay that demand generously. But most of the time the usual stuff batters at our hope for the unusual. And here is this festival to remind us of something that we really know but that needs all the highlighting it can get. Every minute of every day in every year, some people somewhere are making good films. Whenever we open a newspaper to a full-page ad for the latest load of tripe, that huge ad is obscuring the fact—the absolute, demonstrable fact—that at the present moment someone is making a film that we would rejoice to see. The central purpose of the HRW doesn't need approval from me; but I presume to note that, in addition to their humanitarianism, they are wonderfully serving art.

Here are comments on just two of this year's films.

The Children of Chabannes. This is not the first documentary in this field, but the subject cannot be over-celebrated. Lisa Gossels and Dean Withrell, American filmmakers, went to Chabannes, a town in central France, to record what that town did during World War II. The people of Chabannes saved 400 Jewish children from the Germans—French and German and Polish and other children, two of whom were Gossels's father and uncle.

The film is made of interviews with some of the (now middle-aged) children, some of the surviving Chabannes folk who took care of them, and some commentators. Photographs taken during the war are woven with visits to the château where most of them stayed. Some locals talk about a man, a glorious man, named Felix Chevrier, who ran the place. The children were brought there through the auspices of a Jewish rescue organization, but then they became Chevrier's children. And what an unlikely-looking saint! Jolly-faced, mustached, big-bellied, he quite evidently enjoyed a lot of things—including the care of children. An old friend of his tells us that Chevrier's place was not like the other comparable places of which films have been made and which were run by religious people. Chabannes was never a very religious community. Chevrier was what his friend calls a "republican," a staunch secularist believer in the rights of man, even "a bit socialist."

Then there are two elderly spinster sisters, teachers both, who taught at the center and who tell us that the local children were integrated in classes with the Jewish children, to open their Chabannes eyes and minds and to make the newcomers feel welcome. We hear from the sisters and others how, after the Germans moved south to occupy unoccupied France, the children were spirited away to Switzerland through an underground railroad. What is especially splendid about these two old women is that they seem to have no idea how splendid they are.

The last sequence is of a recent reunion: some of the surviving children, now gray-haired, returned to Chabannes to visit those of their saviors who survive. And there is a group picture, taken today, in the same place and poses as the group pictures of those past days.

All this is done straightforwardly, with no slightest attempt at tear-jerking. (Which doesn't exactly preclude tears.) Fundamentally, this 91-minute documentary made me think of *Schindler's List*. Spielberg's film is sometimes slated because it doesn't give anything like a full account of the Holocaust. Of course it doesn't: it's about Schindler. It's not about the mystery of evil; it's about an equally awesome subject, the mystery of good. So is *The Children of Chabannes*.

Three Days and Never Again. An extraordinary documentary. A Russian soldier killed an officer who was harassing him sexually, was sentenced to death, and then had his sentence commuted to life imprisonment. His mother is given permission to visit him in his distant prison, an arduous trip for the old, impoverished woman. She spends three days with him in a small, sparsely furnished room that is part of the prison. Right from the start, it is a surprise that the Russian government permitted the director, Alexander Goutman, to film inside a prison, and we are further struck by the unembarrassment of the mother and son with each other though a camera is watching.

The ailing peasant woman and the slender pale prisoner clearly adore each other and know that they will probably never meet again. The three days—condensed into 53 minutes—might have been conceived by Gorky, as they reveal the lives that led here and will, in effect, lead no further.

The HRW film festival will be at Lincoln Center through June 24 and will then tour to Martha's Vineyard, Amherst, St. Louis, London, and other places to be announced. Smaller groups of some of the films will also be presented at other festivals. Please watch.

Return With Honor (Ocean) is a documentary, unconnected with the festival above, about American prisoners of war

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in North Vietnam. All of them were pilots shot down early in the war. Some of them were imprisoned for seven years. Lieutenant Everett Alvarez was a POW for eight and a half years.

Freida Lee Mock and Terry Sanders, who made this engrossing and chilling film, secured access to North Vietnamese film files, including footage of the very capture of some of these men and their incarceration. We do not get footage of the torture to which many of them were subjected in the early years, though one of the men made drawings. (The torture stopped when Ho Chi Minh died. Whether he ordered it or merely closed his eyes to it is not clear.)

Interwoven with this footage are interviews with some of the men as they are now, together with interviews of some wives. (Senator McCain, whom you might expect to see much of, is glimpsed only twice.) We see the release of the men in 1973 and their eventual reunion with their families. But what is most impressive is the way these men, badly housed, ill-fed, sometimes tortured, resolved as a group to keep their spirits whole. The title of the film was their motto.

I was one of the thousands who opposed the Vietnam War, wrote against it, marched against it, spoke against it, thought it immoral and vicious and hurtful of this country. I still think so and think that the protesters' views have been validated by time. But no one can leave this film without something more than respect for these men. ■

New light on old spies.

Tangled Treason

By SAM TANENHAUS

I.

HERE ARE THE latest installments in the growing literature of Stalin-era betrayal. In *The Haunted Wood*, Allen Weinstein and his Russian collaborator Alexander Vassiliev have mined Soviet intelligence archives to present a rogues' gallery of Americans who spied for the Kremlin in the 1930s and '40s. In *Venona*, John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr have squeezed the pulp from five thousand pages of deciphered cables that verify the grim picture of the Communist underground given many decades ago by defectors such as Elizabeth Bentley and Whittaker Chambers.

Since the early 1990s, when archives began opening here and abroad, skeptics have cautioned against drawing exaggerated conclusions from the flood of new documents. It is true that they must be examined coldly, since they are the fruit of institutional monoliths—in this case, the National Security Agency and the KGB—that do not invite blind trust. Who is to say that papers produced by a counterintelligence program that operated during a time of occasionally paranoid (but also generally well-founded) suspicion of the Soviet Union are not tainted, especially since, as Haynes and Klehr point out, "the NSA was notoriously closemouthed about its activities and by reputation far more secretive than either the Central Intelligence Agency or the FBI"? Venona was indeed shrouded in mystery, beginning with its very name, whose meaning and origin remain unclear. Moreover, the evidence that Venona has yielded comes from the arcane world of cryptanalysis, with its ciphers embedded in codes; it is impenetrable to most of us.

Still, the outlines of the project are clear enough. In 1943, U.S. Army intelligence officials, who had been routinely monitoring overseas cable "traffic" and trying to decode it, set to work on captured communications sent between the United States and the Soviet Union. These were written in a "one-time" code revised after each use and presumed to be indecipherable. But in 1946, after extraordinary persistence, codebreakers finally read a cable from an American-based Soviet official to his superiors in Moscow. The text seemed to refer to atomic espionage.

This was disturbing, but not wholly surprising. There were already strong hints that an underground Communist network was flourishing in North America. In 1945, Igor Gouzenko, a code clerk at the Russian Embassy in Ottawa, had defected and alerted Canadian authorities that several high-ranking officials in the Truman administration, including senior figures in the Departments of State and Treasury, were Soviet agents. Soon afterward Elizabeth Bentley, an American, confessed to the FBI that she had been the courier for a wartime spy-ring with an array of government contacts who had regularly furnished her with classified data.

As more information of this kind emerged, Venona also went forward. By 1948, as Haynes and Klehr write, "decoded Venona cables showed that the Soviets had recruited spies in virtually every major American government agency of military or diplomatic importance." Yet even these messages presented difficulties, because of the esoteric terminology used by Soviet intelligence, and because the identities of the various agents were disguised by aliases. It is odd that Haynes and Klehr have not reproduced any decoded cables in their book, as examples of the material. Luckily, some of the texts have been published elsewhere.

Here is an excerpt from the most controversial Venona intercept, declassified by the American government in 1996. The message was sent in 1945 from a KGB handler in Washington to his superiors in Moscow. Its subject is an important American Communist.

> ALES has been working with the NEIGHBORS continuously since 1935.... Recently ALES and his whole group were awarded Soviet decorations. After the YALTA Conference, when he

THE HAUNTED WOOD: SOVIET ESPIONAGE IN AMERICA—THE STALIN ERA
by Allen Weinstein and Alexander Vassiliev
(Random House, 402 pp., $30)

VENONA: DECODING SOVIET ESPIONAGE IN AMERICA
by John Earl Haynes and Harvey Klehr
(Yale University Press, 487 pp., $30)

THE VIEW FROM ALGER'S WINDOW: A SON'S MEMOIR
by Tony Hiss
(Knopf, 241 pp., $24)

SAM TANENHAUS, a contributing editor at *Vanity Fair*, is the author of *Whittaker Chambers: A Biography* (Random House).

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had gone on to MOSCOW, a Soviet personage in a very responsible position (ALES gave to understand that it was Comrade Vyshinsky) allegedly got in touch with ALES and at the behest of the military NEIGHBORS passed on to him their gratitude....

Who was Ales? Only one name fits the profile: Alger Hiss. In 1935, when he served as counsel for a Senate committee investigating World War I profiteering, Hiss had procured military documents and passed them on to Whittaker Chambers, who microfilmed them for the Soviets (so Chambers testified). Later, when Hiss was a senior official at the State Department, he traveled to the Yalta summit and was one of four American officials who journeyed on to Moscow. Add all that to the unmistakable likeness between "Ales" and Al(ger) (H)iss, and the spy has been unmasked.

ALL THIS ASSUMES, of course, that the Venona cables are authentic and reliable. Not everyone accepts this. Indeed, some who scoff at the idea of a Communist conspiracy eagerly posit an American conspiracy, whose operations theoretically included an elaborately detailed counterfeit paper trail. As Haynes and Klehr explain, however, fabricating historical documents on the scale presented by Venona would have been a prohibitively difficult task. And there is the question of motive: since the documents were kept secret, with no plan for their release ever seriously considered, why go to such lengths to manufacture them? Of course, it is possible they were doctored for internal purposes. But why? Given the extreme secrecy of the project—even President Truman was kept in the dark—misinformation would have reached very few in positions of influence.

Moreover, voluminous source materials of other kinds—including, say Haynes and Klehr, "voluntary statements from defectors from Soviet intelligence, reluctant testimony from persons under legal compulsion, and candid discourse gathered by listening devices," plus the vast scholarly literature—make careful cross-checking possible, and to date no one has seriously challenged the data contained in the Venona cables. Some have questioned the identifications of the code-named agents, a task that was performed by the FBI. It is true that J. Edgar Hoover habitually blurred the distinction between Communist conspirators and the liberals whom he particularly disliked, but the FBI agent who collaborated on Venona, Robert Lamphere, was a careful and responsible investigator.

It is Weinstein who simply leaves it to the reader to accept his conclusions on good faith, which is peculiar, since his book is drawn from KGB dossiers, an even more questionable source than Venona. As the author of the monumental *Perjury: The Hiss-Chambers Case*, which appeared in 1978, Weinstein has earned the reader's trust; but a formulation such as this one, which occurs early in the new book, gives pause: "[Gumperz] met with [Hiss] only once during her stay in this country ... we did not meet with [Hiss].... [However, Hiss], after meeting [Gumperz] at the flat of [Noel Field]," and so on. How do we know the blanks have been filled in correctly? Where do the names come from?

Weinstein has added some citations from the Venona papers, and he seems generally to have used the same cross-referencing method as Haynes and Klehr. But he should tell us so. His failure to do so stems less from a lack of information, it seems, than from a weakness for mystification. *The Haunted Wood* exudes a scent of Eleusinian initiation, most conspicuously in its preface, a vaunting catalogue of exclusive gatherings attended by Weinstein in the company of Soviet generals, plus private tête-à-têtes arranged "with then-CIA Director R. James Woolsey at my home" and with the famous British defector George Blake. Lest we miss the point, the book also features a full page of photographs of Weinstein posing with various Russian eminences under the headline: "The Author and the Post-Soviet Intelligence World." This is a book marred by sensationalism.

WEINSTEIN'S FINDINGS ARE best read in tandem with the more scholarly efforts of Haynes and Klehr. Many of the same names recur in both books, and together they corroborate the guilt of some of the most prominent figures whose loyalty came under suspicion during the Cold War or earlier. Most startlingly, Weinstein and Vassiliev examined a memorandum from the Communist operative Hedda Gumperz to her KGB superiors in 1936 which summarized a conversation between her prize recruit, State Department official Noel Field, and his good friend Alger Hiss, who was leaving the Justice Department to join State and is named openly in the memo. At one point "Alger let him know that he was a Communist," Gumperz reports, and "that he was connected with an organization working for the Soviet Union." This, reinforced by the Venona cable, should settle the question of Hiss's guilt once and for all.

These two books deliver the goods also on Harry Dexter White, the wartime Assistant Secretary of the Treasury and later executive director, for the United States, of the International Monetary Fund; on Lauchlin Currie, the White House economist who helped devise FDR's China policy; and on Laurence Duggan, who headed the State Department's Latin American division in the early 1940s. They were certainly the Soviet Union's most glittering American prizes. But they were by no means the only ones. Haynes and Klehr count "349 citizens, immigrants, and permanent residents of the United States who had had a covert relationship with Soviet intelligence agencies" in the 1930s and '40s.

Is that a high number? It depends. Reviewing *Venona* in *The New York Times Book Review*, Maurice Isserman inferred that of "the approximately 50,000 party members in [the wartime years], 49,700 were not involved in spying, even taking the highest estimate of Communist participation in the spy network. Wartime espionage, an important episode in the history of American Communism, is not the whole story." But the matter is not purely a quantitative one. Haynes and Klehr calculate that at least fifteen Soviet agents infiltrated the Office of Strategic Services, the wartime precursor to the CIA, and also that anywhere from fifty to one hundred OSS men belonged to the Party. Given the sensitive work that the agency was doing, the impact of a small but dedicated Communist contingent would seem significant.

Isserman also made another extenuating point. "In a world consumed in a ... struggle between fascism and antifascism," and in which, briefly, the United States and the Soviet Union were allies, "it is understandable—inexcusable, but understandable—that some scores or hundreds of Americans crossed the line from sharing sympathies to sharing secrets with the Soviets." True enough. But it is also true that the Communist underground recruited employees of the federal government in the mid-1930s, well before the war began; and also true that the operation flourished in 1939–41, when the Soviet Union, by virtue of Stalin's pact with Hitler, was not an ally of the United States. If, as Isserman says, the specter of antifascism persuaded Americans to spy for the Russians, what motivated them to keep at it during the interval when the Soviets and Nazis were partners?

II.

AS THE RECORD becomes fuller, the conduct of American officials who loaned their services to the Soviet Union grows more, not less, mystifying. *The Haunted Wood* opens with an account of Laurence Duggan's under-

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ground career. A rising star in the State Department, he began furnishing confidential documents to the Soviets in the summer of 1936 and continued doing so for three years. "Initially, the materials received from Duggan were 'insignificant' papers on subjects in which the Soviets were utterly disinterested [sic], such as U.S.-Argentina trade relations," Weinstein writes. "Soon, however, he delivered more relevant materials, among them U.S. diplomatic dispatches from European embassies, reports on State Department perspectives on the Spanish Civil War, and a confidential cable from Ambassador [William] Bullitt in Moscow recommending reforms at State in the event of a new world war."

Born in 1905, Laurence Duggan was the son of Stephen Duggan, a prominent professor of political science at the City College of New York and later at Columbia. Sidney Hook, one of his pupils, remembered him as "the very model of an Establishment figure in education and the study of foreign affairs." The son, too, was Establishment-bound. Educated at Princeton and Harvard, he smoothly ascended the ranks of the State Department, becoming the protégé of Sumner Welles, FDR's Groton classmate. But Duggan was one of numerous "romantic ideologues committed to Communist dogma and the Soviet Union's success," Weinstein tells us, though his sentimental belief in the transcendent virtue of Stalin's Russia paled beside that of his best friend at State, Noel Field, who once charmed Hedda Gumperz by materializing atop the steps of the Lincoln Memorial "singing 'Internationale,' the Communist hymn, at the top of his voice—in Russian!"

It was sometimes hard, even for dedicated members, to take the American Communist Party seriously, with its marginal political status, its trivial factional squabbles, its numbing cant; but those entrusted with orders from Moscow were the true soldiers of the revolution, whose prestige carried beyond the CPUSA to its ample fringe of fellow-travelers and sympathizers. Mary McCarthy, reflecting in 1952 on her political dalliances of the 1930s, recalled that "an underground worker rated the highest with us; next were the theoreticians and oracles; next were the activists, who mostly worked, we heard, on the waterfront. Last came the rank and file, whose work consisted of making speeches, distributing leaflets, attending party and fraction meetings, joining front organizations, marching in parades and demonstrations. These people we dismissed as uninteresting not so much because their work was routine but because the greater part of it was visible.... The idea of a double life was what impressed us."

As Duggan learned, however, inhabiting that double life was not always easy. In 1937, Ignatz Reiss, a Soviet resident in Europe shaken by Stalin's atrocities, defected and threatened to expose Duggan among other sources in the United States and Europe. After KGB assassins caught up with Reiss in Switzerland, Moscow sent the all-clear to Itzak Akhmerov, the KGB station chief in Washington, and Duggan continued to deliver documents, including reports (obtained from the Navy Department) on overseas munitions orders. Yet he, too, was assailed by doubts not so different from Reiss's, and began losing sleep over the purges and the show trials. The explanation given by his handlers, that the victims were all "Trotskyite-fascist spies," failed to assuage him. Weinstein writes:

> "He claims he cannot digest events in the Soviet Union," Akhmerov cabled Moscow about a January 3, 1938, meeting with Duggan. "He thinks something is fundamentally wrong, since there cannot be so many members of the Right and Left oppositions who became traitors." Duggan knew personally some of the old Soviet diplomats who became victims of repression in the purges, he told Akhmerov, and did not question their devotion to the USSR.

Still, the collaboration went forward, yielding ever more valuable information. When Duggan was promoted to head the Latin American division, he gained access to "virtually all important cables coming into the department." In October 1939, however, he wanted to call the whole thing off—not, as we might expect, because he was troubled by the Hitler-Stalin pact, which had been signed in August, but because State Department security officers, tracing leaks from Duggan's department, suspected him. Henceforth, he told Akhmerov, he would "only work openly within American leftist circles." Duggan "was not walking away from the movement forever," Akhmerov assured his superiors in Moscow. He and Duggan had parted "as close friends."

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Laurence Duggan and Harry Dexter White, 1946

In 1943, Duggan overcame his reluctance and resumed contact with his Soviet handler. Thereafter, says Weinstein, he "continued to deliver information to Akhmerov virtually up to the day he left the State Department" in 1944. (Eventually, he succeeded his father as head of the Institute of International Education, a Carnegie-endowed organization that coordinated teacher and student exchange programs.) So ended Duggan's underground career, though not his anguish. In December 1948, ten days after FBI agents interrogated him and five days after his friend Alger Hiss was indicted for perjury, Duggan leaped or fell to his death from his office in midtown Manhattan.

That same night Karl Mundt, a Republican on the House Committee on Un-American Activities, called a press conference and announced, on the basis of uncorroborated secret testimony, that Duggan had been implicated in spying. It was brazen headline-grabbing, and even some of Mundt's HUAC colleagues protested. The committee's many critics chimed in angrily. Archibald MacLeish, a friend of Duggan, defended his honor in verses published in the *Herald Tribune*. Edward R. Murrow, another friend, protested on his nightly radio program. In *The Vital Center*, published in 1949, Arthur Schlesinger denounced Mundt for "smearing a dead man." The incident

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became an emblem of HUAC's wanton irresponsibility, and Duggan ascended to martyrdom.

Indeed, as recently as 1995, Schlesinger, reviewing Klehr and Haynes's documentary history, *The Secret World of American Communism*, in these pages, chastised the authors and their publisher:

> Sumner Welles and Adolf Berle, who worked with Duggan on Latin American matters, were both anti-Communists, Berle preternaturally so, and they both rejected this charge [that Duggan was an agent] long ago. I well remember an argument I had in the Office of Strategic Services with Maurice Halperin, then a Communist ... over the Bolivian revolution of December 1943. Halperin, who kept a copy of each day's *Daily Worker* on his desk, took the party line that the revolutionaries were Nazis and that the new regime should be denied recognition. Seeking outside support, I found that Larry Duggan in State strongly opposed the Communist Party view. Without supporting evidence, the Yale University Press should not have permitted this book to blacken the name of a man whom many knew as an able public servant.

But the evidence now exists, as Schlesinger will no doubt agree.

We now know that Duggan was reactivated as an agent months before he declared his differences with Soviet policy. He is mentioned in nine Venona cables, wherein he is said to be "reporting to Soviet intelligence officers about Anglo-American plans for the invasion of Italy, consideration of an invasion of Nazi-occupied Norway... U.S. diplomatic approaches to Argentina's military government, and secret discussions regarding a common Anglo-American policy toward Middle Eastern oil resources." That Schlesinger was mistaken, or deceived, is not the point. What was interesting was his defense. It came straight out of the 1949 playbook of the Americans for Democratic Action, and it revived the premise that a man's loyalty can be construed from his political sympathies. It is the same argument, made from the obverse side, that HUAC and Joseph McCarthy used in equating a lenient view of the Soviet Union with treason.

This formula was the slapdash creation of a particularly anxious moment in American history, the first bitter months of the Cold War, when the emerging bipolar struggle with the Soviets bred an ethos of ideological conformity that actually worked to the advantage of those with something to hide. When Hiss left the State Department to assume the presidency of the Carnegie Endowment in 1947, for example, rumors reached John Foster Dulles, the chairman of the Carnegie board, that Hiss was a Communist. Upon making inquiries, Dulles was assured by security officials that Hiss's ideological resume was clean. And it was: he staunchly supported the Marshall Plan, a strong credential at a time when many "progressives" were denouncing it as a needless provocation of the Soviet Union. At Yalta, Hiss had presented a closely reasoned memo disputing the Soviet contention that all of its republics should be allotted a vote in the U.N. Security Council. Yet as soon as the summit ended, Hiss had flown to Moscow to receive a decoration for his services to the Russian people. A man's ideological history could prove a poor guide to his deepest allegiances.

III.

BUT WHAT DO we mean by loyalty, anyway? Even as Duggan and Hiss were slipping secrets to the Soviets, they were performing admirably in their appointed posts, winning the trust of Welles and Berle (in Duggan's case) and of Dean Acheson and Edward Stettinius (in Hiss's case). Of course, it is possible these agents were playing a Le Carré-like game of mirrors, teasingly distancing themselves from the Soviet Union as a form of protective coloration. But the Russian files unearthed by Weinstein and Vassiliev capture Duggan in the throes of genuine torment, and Hiss's two roles were so directly opposed as to cancel one another out. Whatever assistance he gave to the Soviets by passing along documents was vitiated by the policies he actively supported as head of the U.N. desk. Wouldn't Moscow have been better served by relieving him altogether of the stress of spying? Why not let him rise ever higher in the State Department and ultimately develop policies favorable to the Kremlin?

These books do not ask, or answer, questions of this kind. They stay within the useful but narrow confines of their documentary purpose. Haynes and Klehr adopt, for the most part, a prosecutorial tone. They revisit familiar controversies, heaping more evidence on the accused. And they do it effectively: they have produced the most complete survey yet of the Communist networks. Only at the end do they pause to wonder, "Why did American Communists spy for the USSR?" Their answers are rather mechanical. They tell us that some spies "professed their enthusiasm for Soviet communism and expressed their gratitude for the opportunity that espionage afforded to help strengthen the Soviet state." They quote boilerplate from the official CPUSA press on the glories of Stalin, "the greatest man of our era." They remind us that many American Communists were Russian immigrants or the children of immigrants in whom "the twin attraction of Communist and Russian loyalties produced ... a form of Soviet patriotism that overwhelmed their weak ties to American national traditions."

That last comment is the sort of expostulation that Whittaker Chambers used to make in his fervent "counterrevolutionary" phase, when he stopped seeing his many Jewish friends—including those who had thrown him a lifeline out of the Party and supported him during the Hiss case—and counseled the FBI to deny a government job to a colleague from *Time* magazine because she had immigrated to the United States "late in life" and "such people come to this country with minds fully molded to the way of life in their native lands" and can "never become real Americans." But what about WASPs such as Hiss and Duggan, with their Ivy League pedigrees and their ties to the Eastern establishment? What attracted them to "secret work"? The question does not seriously engage Haynes and Klehr.

WEINSTEIN ALSO sidesteps it. He laudably abjures "the overheated manner that has characterized much Cold War literature," but his solution, to eliminate politics from the discussion, errs in the opposite extreme. Much of his narrative reads like gossip:

> The ministry offered $6,000, but in the end, "Frenchman" struck a deal with the New York station to sell the equipment for only $4,000!
>
> ... although protesting her continued passionate love for the Russian, she had fallen in love *again* and been married!
>
> ... former President Herbert Hoover now joined the small army of influential [Boris] Morros relationships, along with the previously mentioned [Thomas E.] Dewey and [Earl] Warren!
>
> He filched a dry-ice process that prevented ice cream from melting!

And so on. Weinstein's point seems to be: "Don't confuse me with the ideologues. I know how pointless much of this was." But why, then, pursue it at such length and in such detail? Why report so faithfully the tribulations of Boris Morros, the promiscuities of Martha Dodd, the venalities of Congressman Samuel Dickstein, the comical largesse of Michael Straight? If HUAC and Joseph McCarthy falsely cheapened the political dilemmas of a generation into a theater of guilt and innocence, then the arch prose of *The Haunted Wood* trans-

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lates them into political farce. As if there is never any danger in political farce.

But there is no gainsaying the documents that Weinstein has found. They help us to see, for instance, how an agent such as Duggan, ensconced in the clubby world of the State Department, lived outside the normal limits of Communist "discipline." However romantic he may have been, Duggan remained a shrewd and careful manager of his public career. The Russian files show him, not his Soviet "control," dictating the terms of their collaboration. If Duggan wanted to suspend his meetings with Akhmerov, the meetings stopped. If he was troubled by the Great Terror, it was up to Akhmerov to ease his mind. Moscow made this very clear: "All the puzzling questions from [Duggan] must receive exhaustive answers from you. Leave nothing unclear and unsatisfied. Always note the issues [Duggan] is interested in and inform us.... We cannot lose him for any reason." Thus indulged, Duggan felt free to repudiate Soviet policy in Bolivia even as he kept the Soviets apprised of American oil policy in the Middle East.

So, too, with Hiss, who could bicker with Stalin's diplomats in Yalta and promptly fly off to Moscow to accept the gratitude of Andrei Vyshinsky. On some issues (the integrity of the United Nations, the establishment of the Marshall Plan), Hiss might side with the United States, while on other issues (the sharing of military secrets) he might favor the Soviets. Duggan and Hiss (and, we may suppose, White and Currie) functioned less as moles than as ideological freelancers, sampling various positions, trimming the differences between the United States and the Soviet Union, perhaps even priding themselves on the contradictions. These were not dual loyalties; they were negotiable loyalties.

The risks were high, but then the New Dealers recruited into the CPUSA's cluster of underground cells in the 1930s were conscious of being on an important mission, rather like the heroes and the martyrs glorified in the novels of Malraux and Silone. In her memoir *Great Day Coming*, the writer Hope Hale Davis, who joined a Communist cell in 1935, recalled the stressful atmosphere: "We must keep away from any place where leftists might gather. We must avoid, as far as possible, associating with radicals, difficult as that might be in Washington. Even liberals ... were out of bounds." Davis's husband, an economist named Hermann Brunck, suffered a nervous breakdown when the pressure of his "special work" grew too intense. The economist Nathaniel Weyl, who briefly belonged to the same underground cell as Alger Hiss, found the secrecy unbearable, and in 1934 he left Washington altogether.

IV.

All these figures command our interest today because they personified the contradictions and the confusions of their era's politics. Denizens of a world that counterposed liberal meliorism against a doctrine of revolutionary violence, they were well aware of the contradictions and tried to resolve them, however disingenuously. The phenomenon was explored most perceptively by Lionel Trilling in his novel *The Middle of the Journey*, published in 1947 but set in 1938, a year of crisis for many on the left. Its protagonist, John Laskell, a social scientist and a fellow traveler, struggles to reconcile the conflicting visions of the future promulgated by two Communist friends, one of whom, Laskell's academic colleague Arthur Croom, is wholesomely All-American and programmatically optimistic, while the other, Gifford Maxim, is a defector who alludes darkly to monstrous crimes he has witnessed and equates the Soviet future with the apocalypse.

Which, then, is the true face of Communism?

Once Laskell's sense of the contradiction between his two friends had been puzzling and intense. But now it was possible to hold Gifford Maxim and Arthur Croom in his mind with no awareness of contradiction at all. He was able to see them both as equally, right was perhaps not the word, but valid or necessary. They contradicted each other, the administrator and the revolutionary, and perhaps, eventually, one would kill the other. Yet now Laskell saw how they complemented each other to make up the world of politics.

In figures such as Duggan and Hiss, similarly, the administrator and the revolutionary similarly converged. As spies, they lived dialectically. They were policy tinkerers on a mission to alter the course of history.

To what extent were the "administrative" innovations of the New Deal implicated in the "revolutionary" crimes of Stalin? Might the two be connected at the root? Trilling would broach this question, gingerly and indirectly and with supreme tact, in his next book, *The Liberal Imagination*, which famously observed that "it is one of the tendencies of liberalism to simplify, and this tendency is natural in view of the effort which liberalism makes to organize the elements of life in a rational way.... [But] organization means

ONE CASE AT A TIME

Judicial Minimalism on the Supreme Court

CASS R. SUNSTEIN

"*One Case at a Time* presents a fascinating argument: that there is a hidden majority of [judicial minimalist] Justices, that it is right in what it is doing and that it is adjudicating in a way that moves beyond the recent ideological stalemate about the Supreme Court's role... Respectful of the political branches, mindful of the role of the Supreme Court in the whole of American government, this admirable book makes a judicious case for a philosophy of judging as a humble, difficult, essential art."
—Lincoln Caplan,
NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW

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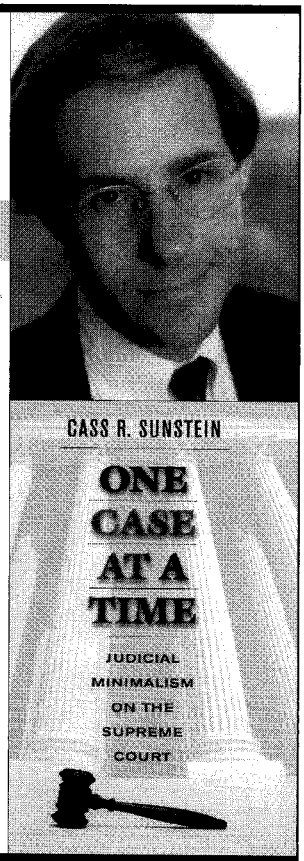

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delegation, and agencies, and bureaus, and technicians.... The lively sense of contingency and possibility, and of those exceptions to the rule which may be the beginning of the end of the rule—this sense does not suit well with the impulse to organization."

Similar doubts, though more crudely expressed, had been lurking for years. As early as 1933, Roosevelt's adversaries had denounced the New Deal as Bolshevism in disguise. In 1938, HUAC's first chairman, the rabble-rouser Martin Dies, had declared war on "idealists, dreamers, politicians, professional 'do-gooders' and just plain job-hunters." Like many heartland conservatives, he viewed the enlarged federal bureaucracy created to administer the New Deal as a conspiracy of sorts. With the advent of World War II, these rumblings quieted, but after Yalta, particularly as Truman began institutionalizing Roosevelt's reforms, the sounds of discontent grew louder.

They became deafening in 1950, with the guilty verdict against Hiss, a poster boy for the New Deal in all its phases and an ally of Eleanor Roosevelt, who was warmly hated by the right. Joseph McCarthy led the pack in linking the perjury case to grievances that dated back to 1933. After first warning of additional Hisses hiding out in the State Department, McCarthy soon accused Roosevelt of having supervised "twenty years of treason," and declared that George Marshall and Dean Acheson were doing the Kremlin's secret bidding. McCarthy's "investigations" created a desert of allegation and counter-allegation in which the nuances of Trilling's perception could not possibly thrive.

In 1948, Dwight Macdonald could write of the Progressive Party's presidential candidate: "It is not true that Henry Wallace is an agent of Moscow. But it is true that he behaves like one." At the time, readers understood that Macdonald was not calling Wallace a Communist, but was instead bemoaning the willful stupidity of the fellow-traveling left, which had ceded all autonomy to the Soviet Union. In the space of two years, however, ironic formulations such as Macdonald's seemed indistinguishable from McCarthy's slanders, and liberals recoiled from performing the dialectical surgery on themselves that Trilling had demanded in *The Liberal Imagination*. This reluctance was understandable to some extent. Who had the stomach for exploring possible congruencies between FDR's "state capitalism" and Stalinism after McCarthy had equated the New Deal with a Red plot? Who had any appetite for re-calibrating the complex loyalties of Laurence Duggan once fear of the "enemy within" mutated into paranoid fantasy? The more pressing task, in any case, was to rescue the honor of the politics that had done so much good—the New Deal, the Grand Alliance, the Marshall Plan. As long as all that remained under assault, what was required most immediately was to fight back, even if it meant adopting dubious tactics and defending tarnished victims.

The Lie

As one would praise a child or dog, or punish it,
as one would chastise it, or hit it, *hit* it;
as one would say, *sit, sit down, be still*:
so don't we discipline ourselves, disparage,
do as thoughtlessly unto ourselves?

As one would tell a lie, a faithless lie,
not with good intention, to obviate a harm,
but just to have one's way, to win, *prevail*:
so don't we deceive ourselves,
and not even know we are?

A self which by definition cannot tell
itself untruths, yet lies, which, wanting
to tell itself untruths, isn't able to, not then,
and would like sometimes not to know
it's lied, but can't deny it has, not then.

And our righteousness before ourselves,
how we're so barbarous towards ourselves,
so mercilessly violate ourselves;
as one would never, with a loved one, harm,
never, with a dear one, strike, not *strike*.

As one would with an enemy, implacable,
as one would with an animal, intractable,
as one would with a self which savagely resists:
this amputating, this assailing, this self-slashing.
As one would lie, as one so fervently would lie.

C.K. Williams

V.

THE IRONY OF the Venona project was that it proved nearly worthless as a counter-intelligence tool. According to Haynes and Klehr, the Soviets "appear to have learned of [its] existence ... within a year and a half of its origin." One source may have been Lauchlin Currie, who warned Elizabeth Bentley that "the United States was on the verge of breaking the Soviet code." Another source, in 1949, was Kim Philby, who had been detailed to Washington by British intelligence. Touring the Venona site in Virginia, he met with officials there and also with FBI men, and passed all this new-found wisdom on to the KGB. By this time, the Soviets had already absorbed the shock of Bentley's defection, in late 1945. Her disclosures, says Weinstein, "compelled Soviet intelligence immediately to shut down virtually all of its underground operations in the United States."

By 1948, when the public hunt for Reds was gathering momentum, scarcely any Communists were left in government. The best McCarthy could do was dredge up a "pink" dentist at a military base in New Jersey. This did not stop various Congressional committees from grilling college professors and journalists with "pink" histories or expired CP memberships, usually dating back to the 1930s. What had all this to do with the practical dangers of the superpower conflict, which originated in 1946? This question was never answered adequately. Some of the accused, it is true, had stayed on the federal payroll into or beyond the war years. Duggan resigned in 1944, Hiss in late 1946. Harry Dexter White had left the IMF by the time HUAC got around to questioning him. All were out of government. Wasn't that good enough?

It might have been, if not for the executive branch's shielding of Communist agents over the course of two administrations. This was the single truth McCarthy told. Despite repeated warnings that Soviet moles were on the government payroll, Roosevelt had refused to look further. Truman, though more attuned to the problem, had stubbornly ignored evidence that Harry Dexter White was a spy, and had described HUAC's questioning of Bentley and Chambers as a "red herring." Eventually, even George Kennan, who was loyal to Hiss, faulted the White House "for its failure to conduct a proper and exhaustive administrative investigation" of the case at a moment when "the American people had a need ... to know all that it was possible to learn."

At the same time, Truman took actions that encouraged the belief that the Communist problem had not been solved. It

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was his Attorney General, Tom Clark, who drew up the notorious list of "subversive organizations," mainly (once again) hold-over groups from the 1930s. It was Truman's Justice Department that seized on the Alien Registration Act, or the Smith Act, passed in 1940, as a means of prosecuting CPUSA leaders on the grounds (later invalidated by the Supreme Court) that by virtue of their party affiliation they advocated the "violent overthrow" of the United States.

WHY DID THE search for Communists go forward with so little respect for civil liberties? Haynes and Klehr supply one answer:

> The investigations and prosecutions of the American Communist movement undertaken by the federal government in the late 1940s and early 1950s were premised on an assumption that the CPUSA had assisted Soviet espionage. This view contributed to President Truman's executive order in 1947, reinforced in the early 1950s by President Eisenhower, that U.S. government employees be subjected to loyalty-security investigations. It also lay behind the 1948 decision by the Truman Administration to prosecute Eugene Dennis and other CPUSA leaders under the sedition sections of the Smith Act. The government's loyalty-security program in the late 1940s had a rational basis—but that is not to say that the program was well designed or administered with skill and discretion, or that there were not serious abuses and injustices.

But this overlooks the tangled politics of the period, and it presupposes a unity of intent that never existed. Truman's loyalty program was principally an effort to undercut a Republican-controlled HUAC. Eisenhower expanded the program to include the catch-all "security risks" as a means (he hoped) of reining in McCarthy. In his recent book *Secrecy*, Daniel Patrick Moynihan cites a document in which Omar Bradley, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, decrees that President Truman should not be told about Venona because it was Army "property." Guarding the secrecy of the decryption project meant that prosecutors were denied access to the most compelling evidence they had, the intercepted cables. This left the government in the awkward position of knowing a conspiracy existed but having to fall back on weaker evidence, usually the reminiscences of ex-Communists who were themselves tainted by their checkered histories and their sometimes ambiguous motives.

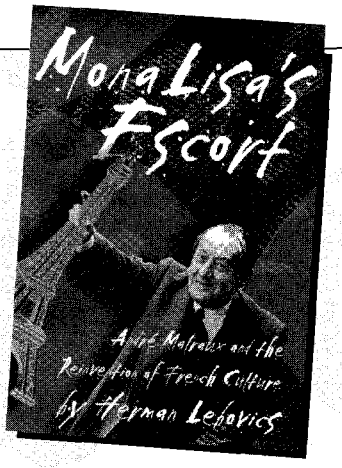
Moynihan thinks the government should have released whatever information it had from the start and thereby brought the true nature of the Soviet threat out into the open, rather than let Mundt and McCarthy run wild. This seems naïve—rather like the argument, heard so often in the past year, that President Clinton could have spared himself impeachment had he only come clean before the public. The truth is that congressional Republicans would have howled for the head of the self-confessed perjurer; so, too, Republicans in 1948 would have cried treason as soon as Truman, a weak unelected president struggling to maintain the support of his own party, admitted he had inherited an administration thick with subversives. It was not secrecy that gave us McCarthyism. It was the public hunt for spies, and the duplicity of the spies themselves.

DO THESE BATTLES really need to be fought again, half a century after the guilty verdicts achieved in the Hiss and Rosenberg cases? Alas, they do, as long as fictitious counter-narratives continue to exfoliate. Consider *The View from Alger's Window*, a new memoir by Tony Hiss, Alger's son, wherein the father shuffles on stage in the homely pose of a Popular Front "little guy," as if jointly imagined by Howard Fast and Paddy Chayefsky. What "Alger hadn't expected," Tony Hiss explains, in a discussion of his government career,

> was that so soon after banding together in the 1930s to fight the Depression, and such a very short time after battling side by side against Hitler in the 1940s and triumphing over his totalitarianism, so many Americans would seem to have forgotten their common purposes, the deep fellow feeling, the national sense of neighborliness and concern, of rolling up sleeves and getting the job done, the gold thread of shared humanity that had seemed, for a time, to forge a permanent sense of community and mutual respect among Americans from all backgrounds.

So it was not Hiss who failed his country. It was his country that failed Hiss!

Can this be the same Hiss who met Chambers's accusations by planting false rumors that he was mentally ill and a spurned homosexual? Or was that just another neighborly instance of "rolling up sleeves and getting the job done"? But this, after all, is Alger's son. A special case, right? Well, no. Tony Hiss's analysis is not his alone. *The Nation*, for example, which should comport itself humbly in the matter of Hiss and Company, recently sought to discredit the work of Haynes



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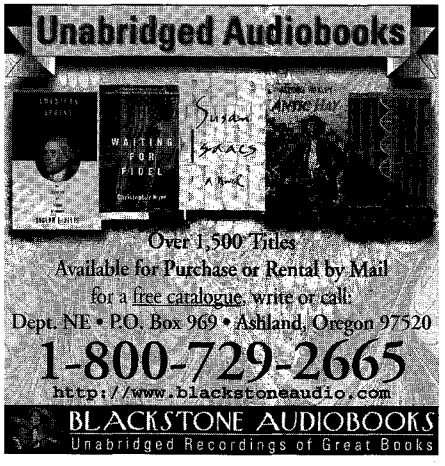
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and Klehr because "the project has received extensive funding from such hard-line conservative sources as the Bradley, Olin and Smith Richardson foundations." If conservatives back the book, then the book is wrong. Scholarly questions have political answers. Follow the money, for it is all we need to know.

It is not all we need to know, of course. So let us go back to the beginning. By the late 1940s, the Soviet Union had emerged as our totalitarian adversary, supplanting Nazi Germany, its defeated rival and recent partner. Some had predicted the Soviets would pose precisely such a threat. Whittaker Chambers, for one, had spelled out the dangers in the pages of *Time* magazine, earning the enmity of colleagues who concluded he must be paranoid. (It is interesting to learn from *Venona* that three of Chambers's most bitter adversaries at *Time* were KGB agents, just as Chambers suspected.) Others on the left, enamored of the Soviet Union, stoutly defended its every move, even as Stalin tightened his grip on Central Europe, even as the list of his crimes steadily lengthened, even as the number of corpses soared into the millions.

But today the wish to extenuate "progressive" betrayal is still with us. The "new historian" Ellen Schrecker bids us overlook the consequences of atomic spying—"Were these activities so awful?" she asks—and instead honor the spies' motives. She would have us "go beyond the question of guilt or innocence to ascertain not only how dangerous the transmission of unauthorized information was, but also why it occurred." Fair enough. But her answer—that the Communists "thought they were 'building ... a better world for the masses,' not betraying their country"—simply enshrines the Party's own dogma. We know too well what "better world" the Soviets were building.

It was plain enough, too, in 1938. The new archival evidence importantly summarized by Haynes and Klehr and Weinstein points us, yet again, to the fundamental question that for more than half a century has informed the Communist dilemma, but has never been adequately answered. Why did Americans go on spying for the Soviet Union long after the truth of Stalinism was clear for all to see? What made Laurence Duggan hand over more documents even as the Great Terror was keeping him awake at night? ■

Making It

By LEE SIEGEL

Turn of the Century by Kurt Andersen

(Random House, 659 pp., $24.95)

READERS WILL, I HOPE, be picking up Kurt Andersen's book for years, even for decades, to come. Though *Turn of the Century* takes place just months from now, in the year 2000, it touches on so many issues, it broaches so many dimensions of modern life, it opens up so many new frontiers of thinking and feeling, that it should be pored over far into the future. It would be a shame if, as the author himself has publicly worried, the book's appeal to later readers turned out to be as brief as the book's time-frame.

By readers, I do not mean ordinary readers. I mean anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists. Whole teams of them. For this book's significance as a cultural phenomenon is exactly proportionate to its insignificance as a work of culture. Perhaps when the century does turn, the anthropologists will be able to examine why a book so empty of wit, imagination, and humanity is being hailed in the universe of newspapers and magazines as a work of wit, imagination, and humanity. The sociologists might investigate the social conditions that led this book's publisher to call the book a novel, when the label "novel" is merely a pretext for the writer to take care of other kinds of business; and they can delve also into the overwrought economic circumstances behind the decision to print this book in one hundred thousand copies. But the psychologists will have the most taxing task of all. If they accomplish it with success, their rewards will be great, and so will their legacy. Their challenge will be to recreate the psychic atmosphere that this book consummately represents, a climate in which the novel, as a form of the imagination, is banally dissolved into its antithesis, an instrument of the practical, promotional will.

With the noisy publication of *Turn of the Century*, Andersen has been lauded—largely by his friends in the media—as a gifted chronicler of cityscapes and urban states of mind, an astute social novelist, a master of "sparkling" dialogue, a comic virtuoso, a dazzling satirist of the Internet culture and the business culture and the television culture. Andersen's interview with Charlie Rose was typical:

> *Charlie Rose*: Here is what *Entertainment Weekly* said: "Andersen is likely to find himself boosted into an altogether different orbit. The first, most promising novelist of the third millennium." That's pretty good praise there.
> *Kurt Andersen*: It's a little heavy....
> *Charlie Rose*: It gets better. And I'm not trying to flatter you. Po Bronson, in *The New York Times*, said, "He wins back terrain for the novel that has been ceded to new media, demonstrating that the novel is as alive and as nimble as its high-tech competitors." I mean, that was even—
> *Kurt Andersen*: That produces—
> *Charlie Rose*: That was off the scope.
> *Kurt Andersen*: That produces goosebumps on a Sunday morning. I'll tell you.
> *Charlie Rose*: It did.
> *Kurt Andersen*: Yes.
> *Charlie Rose*: You get up on Sunday morning—
> *Kurt Andersen*: Yeah.
> *Charlie Rose*: In your Brooklyn whatever.
> *Kurt Andersen*: Yeah.
> *Charlie Rose*: To read. And you flip to *The New York Times*.
> *Kurt Andersen*: Yes.
> *Charlie Rose*: Now, I can't believe you waited until Sunday morning, when you could have driven across the bridge.
> *Kurt Andersen*: It was a week ago Sunday, actually—
> *Charlie Rose*: Oh, OK. I—
> *Kurt Andersen*: I got it early. But it was Sunday. No, that was extraordinary.
> *Charlie Rose*: And you pick it up, and he says, "This man has restored the novel to its right place," or something.
> *Kurt Andersen*: Yeah.

Good thing that Rose was not on the air when *The Sound and the Fury* was published. He might have spontaneously combusted.

THE REVIEWS HAVE been about as probing. None that I have read has quoted anything substantial or significant from the book itself, which is the interminable saga of George Mactier and his wife Lizzie Zimbalist, a powerful, rich, and famous couple modeled, as Andersen has done little to discourage all

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the world from believing, on the author and his very wife. (Kurt Andersen's first book, a collection of essays, was called *The Real Thing*. George Mactier's television show is called "Real Time.") So consider these perfectly representative bits of this acclaimed novel and its snide, adolescent mind:

George himself isn't particularly crazy about midtown. It has St. Patrick's, the library, Times Square, and four great office buildings (the Chrysler, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, Lever House, the Ford Foundation), but so much of the rest is mid- and late-twentieth-century scrub, a thicket of chain-store pharmacies (all operated by South Asians now), banks (Caribbeans), tchotchke shops (Israelis and Arabs), and espresso outlets (kids). Midtown, for all the crowds of women, is also pretty sexless. *No; no; no; no; no; no; no; yes; no; no; maybe; no; no; no*. As he does every month or two on a random stretch of Manhattan sidewalk, George is mentally conducting a census: *With how many of the next one hundred women can I imagine having sex?*... downtown, he regularly hits one in nine. One June Friday a few years ago in TriBeCa, he hit one in five, the all-time record....

As they get to the top and head toward the double-wide express elevator down to Swank City, the black Wall Street asshole is holding up a hand for one of his white buddies to sniff.

"So, all these Wall Street assholes—"

"Hey! *You* can't use that phrase," Ben says. "It's like if I said 'nigger.'"

"So, are all these Wall Street assholes you invited actually friends of yours?"

"Are you nuts? They're guys I trade with, guys I do business with, sell-side guys.... Besides, most of them probably *are* assholes."

"She said she thought we should give it a new soundtrack. You remember it, right? What do you think would go best—ska, rap, electro-acoustic, ambient, garage, gothic, psychedelic, noise, or twee-pop?..."

"Ambient might be cool," he says, depressing himself by sounding so much like some ponytailed, middle-aged asshole.

She thought he was an asshole, not because he used the word "sucks" sixty-seven times in twenty minutes....

It has finally become possible, for about three years now, to carry on a phone conversation walking down the street and not look like an asshole. It's still not possible in a restaurant, he and Lizzie agree. Yet is consistently *looking* like an asshole really any different from *being* an asshole? This they are less sure about.

She is the receptionist. George can practically hear the quick farting sound of deflation as her compliment shrinks to a useless, flaccid scrap.

You wouldn't mind if I fist-fucked you in the ass, would you, Daisy? With the stump? You're a plucky girl. I don't think you would mind. Would you?

Lizzie has had five real jobs. At Procter & Gamble she was at the lowest executive rung. At the foundation and at News Corporation, she was still nowhere near the top. Virtual Fortress was too small and hippie-hackerish to have a meaningful top or bottom. At Fine Technologies she is the top. But at Mose Media Holdings she is, for the first time, very near a truly corporate apex....

"Sixty-fifth Street runs east," Lizzie says to Yuri, her driver, a Russian man listening to Schoenberg or Tippett or some other anxiously unlikably mid-twentieth century piece of music.... Lizzie can't imagine telling any driver to turn off classical music, no matter what it is, especially not an immigrant. She didn't want to discourage any flickerings of civilization.

Lizzie, driving, spots a black man walking along the shoulder of the parkway in an orange jumpsuit and says, "Escaped convict?"

George looks up from Goulet and Newton, who are impersonating Gore and Clinton in a skit. "Racist," he says, joking but mirthless.

"You're the one who always thinks black guys driving Mercedeses are drug dealers."

The extreme east side in the Thirties and low Forties is to George the saddest piece of Manhattan, sadder than the scroungiest blocks of Harlem or the Lower East Side, sad in some permanently modern Diane Arbus way instead of a Jacob Riis way.... The streets are peopled by lonely menopausal flight attendants, cut-rate Donald and Ivana Trumps, unusually crabby Korean shopkeepers, single mothers clinging to the first or last rung of respectability, contagiously unhappy people.

George doesn't like it when [Lizzie] uses the word *loser*, and neither does she,

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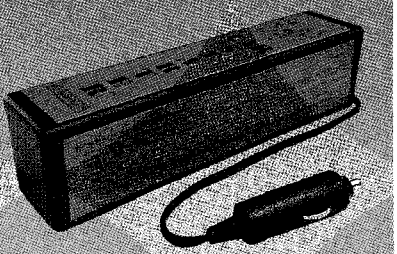

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really—it's so categorically harsh. But in her world, the losers seem to be multiplying.

"What do you call black people?"

"Black people."

"But African-American is halfway there, right? This country went from 'nig-nog' to 'colored' to 'Negro' to 'black' to 'Afro-American' and back to 'black' in, what, ten years?"

"Black people were never called 'nig-nogs' in America, Zip."

"I would rather live in a sunny city of stupid pretty people," George continues, "than a rainy city of smart ugly people like Seattle. I would." He doesn't know if he really would, but he enjoys saying so.

The first act of self-assertiveness in his life, and [Lizzie's] stifled it already, quashed him [Lance, her employee], cut off his tiny Massapequa balls. He'll probably go home and shave the new goatee. Poor little Lance.

"This," [George] says, nodding toward the radio, "is related to the blues. Probably"...

"Related to the blues," Max [George's son] asks, "like apes are related to us?"

"Well. Yeah. Sort of like that," George says.... George begins constructing his explanation of why an analogy involving apes and the music of black people is inherently tricky and probably unwise.

Fuck you, you patronizing, stupid, sanctimonious, middle-market news director asshole.

KURT ANDERSEN HAS been crying irony like an all-purpose insanity plea throughout his career as a magazine editor and writer. It just won't wash anymore, and certainly not in this book, which is being marketed as brilliant satire. For one thing, there is the evidence of Andersen's own musings on the alleged targets of his alleged satire, as expressed to Charlie Rose:

There's danger inherent in the technology of—of—of the Net. There's also tremendous profound power and liberation.

Everyone is a business person in a certain sense today because business values are the—almost the exclusive values that matter today, that are granted importance. And that struck me as a strange and both horrible and interesting new condition.

There is the blending of fact and fiction in all kind—in all realms. And the real and the fake and the authentic and the inauthentic.... It really runs through our entire cultural life, I think. And it's—I think it's important to try to—for people to try to keep a bead on what's real and what's fake, but not necessarily—not necessarily jump to the conclusion that the ersatz is necessarily terrible.

This is Andersen's actual view of life. He is not a satirist. He is the perfect product of Jean Baudrillard's brain, with an agent. And the proof of the artless and unfunny nature of his enterprise is to be found in his book itself, in which the narrator's tone and values are indistinguishable from those of his hero and his heroine.

Consider the bivocal hymn, in both the narrator's and George's voice, early on in the book, to the "two basic show-business personality types, the Merry Chatterer (Steve Ross, most of the DreamWorks principals...) and the Inscrutable Hardass (Michael Ovitz, Barry Diller, John Malone). George finds virtues in both.... But George's preferred executive type is an old-fashioned mogul hybrid, the Merry Hardass, who he's discovered is surprisingly rare, especially in Los Angeles. Merry Hardasses are scary but fun, like fairy-tale creatures. Harvey Weinstein of Miramax ... is one.... Sumner Redstone of Viacom ... and the movie producer Scott Rudin ... are also Merry Hardasses ... David Geffen, a Merry Hardass, is paradigmatic, the Cary Grant of Hollywood's underdressed generation." These are not ironies. They are the insider banalities of a man who would like to be asked to dinner.

IN THE END, George, a television news producer, and Lizzie, who runs her own software company, rise above and triumph over their milieu. They dwell among rotten, selfish, backstabbing money-grubbers, but they have the difference that counts. They *know* that they are rotten, selfish, backstabbing money-grubbers. Ben Gould, a superficial and obnoxious Wall Street trader whose hip, self-conscious attitude—and immense wealth—have won him a place as George's best friend, smugly introduces himself as a "Wall Street asshole." The knowingness in this book is so pervasive that its people are knowing even about themselves. There is protection in self-knowingness against the vulnerability of self-knowledge.

The plot of *Turn of the Century* revolves around George Mactier's efforts to get into production "Real Time," a news show that explicitly blends fact and fiction. Running parallel to George's escapades is Lizzie's fight to save her software company from a takeover by Microsoft and at the same time to get as much money from Microsoft for her company as possible. As George flies back and forth between New York and Los Angeles, and Lizzie shuttles between New York and Seattle, Lizzie gets hired by Harold Mose, the billionaire owner of the broadcasting company that employs George. Lizzie's influence in the company rises, and after timid and unimaginative executives decide to kill "Real Time," George's jealousy of Lizzie grows, along with his anger and his suspicion, which is unfounded, that she and Mose are having an affair. In the end Microsoft gets the better of Lizzie, who then turns around and sells her stock in Mose's company for $2,181,000 and makes up with George, who makes up with Lizzie and then turns around and takes on a lucrative assignment to make a documentary about Zapatista teenagers that is being financed by Benetton. In the course of all this, George and Lizzie, thanks to some manipulations of the market by Ben Gould and a gang of punk German computer hackers, have their revenge on both Microsoft and Harold Mose.

George and Lizzie thus are (trivially) wronged by other powerful, rich, and famous people and become powerful, rich, famous martyrs to the lowdown world to which they reluctantly, but energetically and with amazing success, return every day to keep making their fortunes. At book's end, they realize self-flatteringly that "the wild beasts do bite and the quicksand kills—that every special effect in life is real—but also that their good luck so far impels them to go back out for more...." Lizzie even likes to read these lines from the *Aeneid*: "A few succeed/By Jove's grace or a hero's soaring will." So George and Lizzie realize that they have been right all along, and that the world has been wrong all along. This is like Gatsby sending Nick Carraway packing at the end of the novel, marrying Daisy, and getting appointed Secretary of the Treasury.

TURN OF THE CENTURY purports to be the work of a social novelist, but it is the work of a very social sociopath. Andersen is animated by a contempt for people, but he lacks the grandeur of the true misanthrope. He is too anxious, too resentful, too *mondaine* for that. This book is not about its subject so much as it is a part of its subject. *Turn of the Century* is the novel as resume makeover. It is a 659-page job application directed toward the Merry Chatterers and the Inscrutable Hardasses and the Merry Hardasses.

If you live outside a half-mile radius within the island of Manhattan, you probably have not heard of Kurt Andersen. But here in the city, he is known as a prince of

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the media, "part of the natural aristocracy," as Andersen himself has a character refer to George Mactier. In the New York media world, Andersen is an influential figure. In the mid-1980s, he co-founded the hip, cool, satirical, ironical, mostly unreadable *Spy*, which lampooned the greedy rich, the vacuous famous, and just about anyone with a public name; then he wrote for *Time*; then he served as editor-in-chief of *New York* magazine; then he penned a culture column in Tina Brown's *New Yorker*. This is an impressive trajectory. And yet it is not much more than a trajectory. Andersen and his co-founders put *Spy* on the block as soon as its readers' threshold for its venom dropped; he was canned at *New York* after only two and a half years; and his *New Yorker* column was drastically cut back.

In *Turn of the Century*, Andersen sneers that "outside big cities, people seem to age faster, become fatter and balder sooner, even though they also tend to dress and talk and eat like adolescents at thirty and forty and fifty. They're teenagers with mortgages and multiple marriages and forty extra pounds." The fact is, though, that outside New York and Los Angeles, where most of this book is set, the tens of millions of steady, reliable, professional people who may actually lead fulfilling lives probably would consider Andersen a "loser," though they also probably would be too modest and too decent to use a word so categorically harsh. But in New York and Los Angeles perpetual motion is all, even if its propulsion consists of one restless job after another. Perpetual motion is one of the unwitting themes of *Turn of the Century*, one of the reasons that it is an ideal document of the provincialism of the supposed centers, beside which the provincialism of the supposed provinces seems like breadth of vision. In New York and Los Angeles, you are doing fine so long as you keep screwing up in the most prestigious places. Andersen has hidden his manic careerism behind the veneer of success, just as he tries to hide his repellent social attitudes behind the culture's automatic imposition of irony. So, thanks to the appearance of perpetual motion, Andersen is now considered heir to the kingship of several high-profile and well-paying magazines and weekly newspapers. The great expectations among the media aristocrats for Andersen's next position are what account for the media aristocrats' acclamation of Andersen as their very own Dickens. In this respect, too, *Turn of the Century* is something new: the Well-Connected Novel.

It is curious that anybody still considers Andersen to be as in touch with a certain register of American life now as he was at *Spy*. It is curious because *Turn of the Century* drips with *Spy* style, which was often a vicious style, designed not just to satirize its victims but also to injure them. *Spy* itself was a charged-up rehash of the *Harvard Lampoon*, at which Andersen served as vice president in college. That experience must have been an asset since, at *Spy*, Andersen knew how to flatter the rich and famous by provoking them, just as a certain kind of undergraduate learns how to flatter his instructors by provoking them. An undergraduate approach to life, presented as sophisticated entertainment, and vouched for by a lavish expense account, appealed to a lot of people in Manhattan in the Reagan years. (That is why the epithets "dumb" and "stupid," which appeared so frequently in *Spy*, appear with such hopeful frequency in *Turn of the Century*.)

The tonal achievement of *Spy* was simultaneously to appear knowing and to disparage the object of knowingness. This, its editors pretended to believe, threw off balance the newly rich Manhattanites whose insecurity about their taste and class and status intensified as their wealth increased. In the end, the newly rich were enthralled by the assaults. (Status anxiety is a lot more pleasant to live with than no-status anxiety.) After heroically attacking Manhattan's business

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elite, Andersen successfully campaigned to get accepted into the Century Club.

The financiers and the business titans among *Spy*'s targets had good reason to be enthralled. They knew a kindred spirit when they saw one. For the cool, black-clad, unemotional, unflappable downtown air that Andersen promulgated is the obverse side of the cool, dark-suited, unemotional, unflappable uptown air of smiling business goodwill. *Spy*'s editors mocked every fixed human attachment, value, and belief. All that was solid they melted into air. They kept themselves open to perpetual adaptation and incessant change. They were Rotarians in dark glasses.

What Andersen once archly flaunted is now virtually delivered as a threat. In a recent interview in *The Washington Post*, he remarked: "'Greed is good' no longer even needs to be said. It's presumed. Today if you're not making money, you're some kind of sap. I don't think there's any longer any debate about that. I find it strange and somewhat chilling." Ponder this for a moment. By irrationally insisting on a generally unacceptable proposition as a general condition, Andersen allies himself with it and thus proclaims his social power. And then he deplores it, thus proclaiming his moral power. This is certainly the very opposite of irony. It is mere flexibility. In Andersen's hands, irony has crumbled—or blossomed—into "fungibility," a business buzz word that Andersen uses throughout *Turn of the Century*. From downtown to uptown in a decade.

ANDERSEN MIGHT BE trying to update himself by converting his erstwhile irony into plain old slipperiness, but his efforts to accomplish this in *Turn of the Century* are as transparent as the old *Spy* nomenclature of side-swipe and insult. In his book, Andersen, who once smoked out people for wanting to be taken for who they were not, is sending smoke signals about who he now wants people to think he is. And who he wants to be taken for is the person of status and class whom he once liked to abuse. An embarrassing spectacle of forced aristo insouciance is everywhere in *Turn of the Century*:

> Emily gives George a look. It's too late to sneak out. He shrugs. How ghastly. How unfortunate. How entertaining.
>
> Part of [George's] dread of plane crashes is the prospect of mass hysteria, sitting among hundreds of screaming, incontinent strangers who all know they are about to die.
>
> If this is a stroke, it's not so bad.
>
> George finds himself thinking about his mother, how his equanimity over Edith Hope's death is causing him more pain than her death.
>
> [Edith Hope] asked Lizzie when she realized she was in love with George. Lizzie grinned. "On his couch during our first real date, about ninety seconds before we fucked."
>
> [George's] sadness is so exquisite, it's breathtaking.

AND ANDERSEN ALSO wants to recreate himself as a sensitive, caring guy. Why go through the ordeal of writing a novel in the first place, unless you are going to use it to renovate your image? Andersen to Rose: "As a journalist I've been somebody who needs to get the assignment [to write *Turn of the Century*] before I can write and somebody has to agree to pay me." Or as Andersen recently told the *New York Press*: "I published a book and used that as sort of my ticket to the next place. It was called *The Real Thing*." Andersen needs the image of a sensitive, caring guy if he is going to be the next real thing in the next big place because he has the reputation of being a guy who is not very sensitive and not very caring. As editor of *New York*, he demoralized the staff with a wave of dismissals, notoriously firing some people by fax. That is why *Turn of the Century* presents an entire episode in which George indignantly castigates Lizzie for advising Mose to lay off some employees. That is why George's mother and Lizzie's father both die during the course of the novel and why, though the pair are actually indifferent to their parents' deaths, either one or the other breaks down and cries every fifty pages or so.

Most ingeniously of all, Andersen gives George only one hand! And the coolest thing is that you just get hints about that until you are more than one-third of the way through the book. So, early on, we experience George making love with Lizzie:

> As they squirm and pull and rub, squeeze and breathe and lick [bear with me], and finally kiss, his sweater stays on. (It isn't self-consciousness about the stump, he told her when she finally asked one night, right after they were married. But with only one hand, a demi-arm, he said, you sometimes have to do triage, make a choice between romantic momentum and romantic etiquette—and pants off trumps shirt off.)

We have not learned anything about the "stump" up until this passage, and we never hear about it or even get another mention of it for at least another hundred pages. This is the bleakest side of *Turn of the Century*, its sunny heartlessness, its mean gross-out humor, its nasty maudlin mechanics. It is reflected also in Andersen's attitudes toward women: the astonishing callousness of those "lonely menopausal flight attendants" on First Avenue. Indeed, any kind of sexual passion expressed by women in this book is identified with a kind of freakishness. Shawna, a young actress—"more android than beast"—who tries to seduce George, gets portrayed like this:

> "It's *so* smooth," she says. "Gosh! The tip is really hard." *Could* this be more squalid? A girl who plays Barbie's pal Stacey phallicizing his stump in public in an ersatz palazzo in Las Vegas . . .
>
> "My daddy's was all kind of bony and rough and bumpylike."
>
> Sick? Very sick. "Your father lost a hand?"
>
> "His whole arm, his right one, up almost to the shoulder. And his right leg to the knee. It happened in Vietnam."

But that is the way it is when you are so self-consciously fungible. There is nothing more threatening than the warmth and the spontaneity of desire. It is the very antithesis of coolness and knowingness. And so it needs to be cleverly labeled and disposed of. It is stupid and dumb and ugly.

ANDERSEN IS SO indifferent to the real folly of the worlds that he describes in *Turn of the Century* that, from time to time, he has to portray them as absurdly wicked. Much has been made of his "audacity" in selecting Microsoft and Bill Gates as the villains for his book. But in true undergraduate fashion, Andersen compares the Gateses and the Harold Moses and their world again and again to the Nazis and their world. One business meeting reminds Lizzie of a "Judenrat planning session." This is supposed to denote a moral sense, when in truth it denotes the absence of one. Having made his reputation in the '80s by ceaselessly attacking the safe and easy target of Donald Trump, Andersen is now trying to make his reputation in the '90s by attacking the safe and easy target of Bill Gates.

How could the publisher of *Turn of the Century* possibly think that people want to read a book which is supposedly about our time, but which is merely about the petty professional competitiveness between a husband and a wife in a Manhattan "power-couple"? A book whose rambling, numbing, bumbling plot is simply

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about the travails of a businesswoman with lots of money who wants more money, and about the obstacles faced by a television producer with lots of money who wants more money, and better ratings, and a new show? The answer is that this is a book that is contrived not to be read but to be noticed. *Turn of the Century* is a book about the media by a media-person for the media. That is why we have it, and that is why it has this month's buzz.

This is vanity publishing on the largest possible scale. For the self-important media love to be told how self-important they are. (Then they can produce show after show about the crisis of media self-importance that is ruining the republic.) And the businesspeople love to hear how sinister their power is. And the Internet people love to hear the alarming news that human nature is being changed beyond recognition by e-mail and personal Websites. And the academic media critics, whose contempt for journalism is their only ticket into journalism, keep feeding the craving for alarm. And the rest of us wait for someone somewhere to reimagine for us the life that we know we really are living, away from the computer, away from the movie screen and the television screen, away even from money. We wait for a real satirical writer to satirize the official and utterly unmenacing satirizers like Kurt Andersen. ■

The Breakthrough

By ANDREW BUTTERFIELD

Leonardo da Vinci: Origins of a Genius by David Alan Brown

(Yale University Press, 240 pp., $55)

BLESSED WITH preternatural powers of observation, Leonardo da Vinci could see and describe the world in greater detail and in a more analytical fashion than any person—artist or scientist—had before. His paintings are masterpieces of uncanny verisimilitude that astounded everyone who saw them. When his cartoon of the *Virgin and Child with St. Anne* was exhibited in Florence in 1501, the population lined up to gaze in fascination, and the *Mona Lisa* caused other artists to "tremble and lose confidence" (so says Vasari) and still draws crowds from all over the world today.

Leonardo's art is magical, superhuman, paradigmatic. Almost wherever he went—Florence, Milan, Rome, France—he changed the course of painting. By the middle of the sixteenth century, he was already regarded as a figure of epochal importance, a father of the High Renaissance; and that assessment is still held valid today. Without Leonardo, the subsequent path of European painting would be inconceivable: without Leonardo, no Raphael, no Caravaggio, no Rembrandt, at least not as we think of them.

But it is perhaps an accident of history that Leonardo became a painter at all. In a different time and a different place, his manifold genius might have taken another shape, and he might have become a scientist or an engineer. Certainly, Leonardo's artistic evolution can be understood only in relation to the problems facing Italian painters, and specifically Florentine painters, in the third quarter of the fifteenth century. Before Leonardo, Florentine painting had been propelled by a powerful but intermittent empirical impulse, which had led to the discovery of single-point perspective and to an emphasis on the three-dimensional volume of figures and objects. In other ways, though, Florentine painting remained a convention-bound enterprise, incapable of accurately representing visual reality. In the naturalistic depiction of color, texture, and atmosphere, it lagged far behind the achievements of Netherlandish art.

Leonardo was fully aware of the inadequacies of his native tradition, and he sought to transform it technically and conceptually. His search for a new solution gave shape to his early career, and set the course of his later development. And yet Leonardo's relation to the artistic context of his youth has eluded understanding. The difficulties arise in part from the mystery surrounding his apprenticeship to Andrea del Verrocchio, the leading sculptor in Italy. For a period of about ten years, ending when he was around twenty-six years old, Leonardo lived with, studied under, and worked for Verrocchio. It was unquestionably the most important artistic relationship in either man's life. But the exact nature of this association has always been hard to grasp.

VERROCCHIO'S ACTIVITY AS a painter and Leonardo's role in making pictures for Verrocchio's studio are complicated questions that have perplexed students of the subject for many years. It was only during the first half of the twentieth century that scholars even developed a consensus view regarding the division of the artists' hands. Thus the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci in the National Gallery of Art and the *Annunciation* in the Uffizi are universally regarded today as works by Leonardo; but less than a hundred years ago, these paintings—so central to Leonardo's early achievement—were assigned to Verrocchio.

Although scholars have succeeded in identifying Leonardo's pictures, nearly all other aspects of his early works are still the subject of intense debate. There is little agreement about their chronology and the sequence of their creation. We are not certain which of the paintings Leonardo made for Verrocchio's studio and which he made as an independent artist. Given all these problems in the basic historical record, it is no wonder that Leonardo's early development has been understood only in the most general and approximate terms.

In his new book, David Alan Brown illuminates Leonardo's early career better than anyone has previously. Brown's ambitions are twofold. He wants to clarify the remaining connoisseurship problems clouding the pictures; and he wants to throw fresh light on the circumstances of Leonardo's emergence as an artist of prodigious creativity. To achieve these goals, Brown concentrates almost exclusively on the five extant paintings that Leonardo made while he still lived with and worked for Verrocchio (at least part-time). His account is learned and intuitive, and he presents his conclusions in clear and fearless prose, unhampered by "perhaps" and "probably." Among scholars of Renaissance painting, his book will surely generate controversy, not least for the certitude of his convictions. To say anything intelligent and new about Leonardo requires a great deal of looking and a certain measure of daring. Brown's book exhibits both of these virtues.

According to Vasari, Ser Piero da Vinci recognized his son's prodigious talents at

ANDREW BUTTERFIELD is an assistant vice president of Christie's New York. He is the author of *The Sculptures of Andrea del Verrocchio* (Yale University Press).

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an early age, and took him to Andrea del Verrocchio to learn painting and sculpture. There is abundant literary, archival, and stylistic evidence proving that Leonardo studied with Verrocchio, but it is unclear when the relationship began. Most scholars set the date some time between 1466 and 1469, and certainly before 1472, when Leonardo registered as a painter in the artists' confraternity. Although it is likely that Verrocchio was Leonardo's first teacher, we cannot be certain of this, and it is important to leave open the possibility that he first studied with someone else. However he came to Verrocchio's studio, it was an extraordinarily fortunate event. From nearly every perspective, Verrocchio was the perfect teacher for the young genius. The sculptor's wide range of interests, from music to science to engineering, his unparalleled knowledge of classical statuary, his vision of the expressive powers of art: all profoundly influenced Leonardo.

There were three things about Verrocchio and his art that were especially important for Leonardo's formation. First, Verrocchio was the greatest draughtsman of his generation in Florence. His pen-and-ink drawings display extraordinary naturalism and animation, and his chalk drawings, with their extremely sensitive description of light and *rilievo*, were also revolutionary. Verrocchio's drawing style was fundamental for Leonardo; indeed, the young artist saved and copied drawings by Verrocchio even in later life, long after he had left the workshop.

Second, during the entire period that Leonardo spent with Verrocchio, the older artist was working on the *Christ and St. Thomas*. Finally erected to great acclaim in 1483, it was the most important sculpture in late-fifteenth-century Florence. Leonardo saw the progress on this sculpture almost every day of his youth, and he may have assisted in its production. Its gestural language and spatial relationships deeply influenced the young painter; and its impact is evident even in some of Leonardo's greatest masterpieces, such as *The Last Supper* and the *Madonna of the Rocks*.

Third, Verrocchio needed assistants to fulfill his painting commissions. Although primarily interested in sculpture, like so many artists in Renaissance Florence, Verrocchio had to take on all kinds of work in order to survive. To aid in the execution of paintings, he hired a series of gifted young artists: not only Leonardo, but Botticelli, Perugino, Ghirlandaio, and Signorelli are known or believed to have spent some time in his studio. Verrocchio would win the commission, provide the basic models and drawings, but then often turn the project over to assistants for completion. Thus, from an early age, Leonardo was employed in making major pictures for top clients under the supervision of the greatest draughtsman in Tuscany.

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Leonardo da Vinci, "Portrait of Ginevra de´ Benci," circa 1474

According to Brown, Leonardo's training can be best understood in relation to Verrocchio's competition with Antonio Pollaiuolo, another Florentine sculptor and painter. During the 1460s, as the older generation of artists died out (e.g. Donatello in 1466, Filippo Lippi in 1469), Verrocchio and Pollaiuolo emerged as the two leading lights and competed head-to-head for nearly every major commission. Verrocchio enjoyed supremacy in the field of sculpture, but Pollaiuolo was the more successful painter. Long before Verrocchio won any known picture commissions, Pollaiuolo was engaged on some of the most important paintings in Florence. Around 1460, for example, he made a series of monumental pictures of the Labors of Hercules for the Medici palace; in the middle of the decade he began the altarpiece of the Chapel of the Cardinal of Portugal; and in 1469 he won the commission for six panels of the Virtues in the Palazzo della Mercanzia, beating out Verrocchio among others. It was in order to get a larger share of such business that Verrocchio trained and hired assistant painters.

Brown believes that Verrocchio embraced this challenge only at the end of the 1460s (a rather late date), and that Leonardo was one of the first assistants employed specifically for the task. "Had Verrocchio not taken up the brush at this time," he writes, "Leonardo might conceivably never have become a painter." This is conceivable, but it is not very likely. Of all the arts, painting was Leonardo's first love; sculpture and architecture were of secondary importance, in theory and in practice. Still, the competition with Pollaiuolo certainly was a prime factor in the character of Leonardo's training and maturation. Pollaiuolo's advantage over Verrocchio lay in the unrivaled realism of his paintings: his figures appeared to move in a more vivid and agitated manner, and his landscapes, with their deep vistas, came closer to what one might actually see from the hills of Tuscany. (The landscapes in Verrocchio's early pictures are wholly fictitious.) To compete in the market, Verrocchio had to augment the naturalism of his own works, and for this he began to rely on Leonardo, who, even as a youth, possessed legendary powers in the description of the world.

Brown uses this feature to identify Leonardo's earliest works, with one startling result. A painting of *Tobias and the Angel*, in the National Gallery in London, has long been accepted as a product from Verrocchio's shop. The figures in the picture are related to drawings and sculptures by the master; but overall the picture has a hard and bright air, and the landscape is so rudimentary that most connoisseurs have been reluctant to

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attribute the painting to Verrocchio himself. Looking closely, Brown notices things no one has seen before. He observes that the two animals in the picture (Gabriel is accompanied by a small dog and Tobias carries a large fish) are depicted with a startling degree of verve and realism. The scales of the fish, for example, are glossy and vitreous, his eye has just begun to cloud over in death, and he hangs from the string in Tobias's hand with a convincing appearance of gravity. Such realistic details far surpass anything in contemporary Florentine painting, including the works of Pollaiuolo. Brown also notices that the painting of Tobias's hair and sleeves resembles comparable passages in other early works by Leonardo. Finally, he reports that technical study has recently shown Tobias's hair to have been painted by a left-handed person; and so far as we know, Leonardo was Verrocchio's only left-handed pupil or assistant.

According to Brown, the painting was executed by Leonardo in part, and it is his first surviving picture. This attribution has won Brown's book international attention; his hypothesis was even front-page news in England when it was first announced. The attribution is likely to be correct; and the best pages in Brown's book are made up of careful observations of this kind. He is right, for example, when he takes the Dreyfus Madonna away from Leonardo da Vinci and gives it to Lorenzo di Credi, another assistant in the shop. Similarly, his comments on the Munich Madonna are apt and intelligent, and his identification of this picture with one formerly in the collection of Giuliano de' Medici (Lorenzo's brother) is plausible. No two scholars see early Leonardo the same way, and not all of Brown's points will win general acceptance; but the book is crowded with astute observations about paintings and drawings. Also noteworthy is Brown's sophisticated use of computer imaging to reconstruct the original state of the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci. In the future, art history texts are sure to make more use of such techniques.

In his life of Leonardo written in the mid-sixteenth century, Vasari said that Leonardo's first painting was the angel in the foreground of Verrocchio's *Baptism of Christ*. In the twentieth century, scholars have determined that Leonardo also painted the figure of Christ and much of the landscape. Despite this change, most have continued to accept Vasari's statement that it comes at the start of Leonardo's career. But now Brown argues that Leonardo's contribution must date from the mid-1470s, at the conclusion of his stay in Verrocchio's shop. He rightly remarks upon the extraordinary sophistication of the landscape, and the complexity and the intricacy of the angel's pose. Brown's re-dating is almost certainly correct. For Brown, the artistic partnership of Leonardo and Verrocchio begins with *Tobias and the Angel* and ends with the *Baptism of Christ*. In the first, the youth looks to the older figure for guidance; in the second, the Precursor acknowledges the Son.

DESPITE THE MANY merits of Brown's book, there are some fundamental questions about Leonardo's early career that deserve further investigation. Brown says relatively little about Leonardo's use of oil, nor does he investigate Leonardo's revolutionary analysis of light and color. These are not merely technical issues; they are central to Leonardo's evolution and importance. To understand them, I believe, we must take a closer look at Verrocchio's studio, and the two traditions of painting—the Florentine and the Netherlandish—that Leonardo encountered there.

Ernst Gombrich has observed that Florentine and Netherlandish painters of the early Renaissance emphasized different fundamental properties of light. Florentine painters concentrated on "illumination," or the sculptural power of light to reveal things as solid and tangible objects, consistently modeled by light and shade. Flemish artists instead emphasized "luster," or the reflection of light off surfaces, thereby permitting them to convey the specific character of various materials. The easiest way to understand the difference is to look at works of the two greatest painters of the early fifteenth century, Masaccio and Jan van Eyck. In Masaccio, everything is concretely modeled, but nearly all materials are depicted as if their surfaces had the same reflective properties. Van Eyck is less consistently good at *rilievo* and perspective, but he perfectly captures the appearance and the texture of different kinds of objects; for instance, glass, stone, jewels, and fabrics are all shown to reflect or to absorb light in a manner unique to them.

Gombrich's account may be generally true, but it is misleading in two ways. Flemish painters at times surpassed Florentines in rendering illumination, especially in portraiture, where they excelled in this regard to a very high degree. And during the forty years separating Masaccio and Leonardo, most Florentine artists were inconsistent in their grasp and their application of Masaccio's methods, and they succeeded only in approximating the power of his modeling. The revolution

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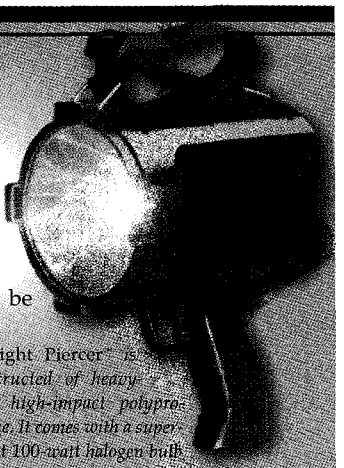

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that Masaccio began was incomplete.

In the fifteenth century, moreover, artists did not think of the Florentine and Netherlandish methods as opposing ways to describe the world. (That sectarian view of art was launched in the sixteenth century.) Quite the contrary, the achievements of Masaccio and van Eyck were founded on the acute observation of light; and those Florentine painters who were interested in the empirical investigation of visual reality (rather than a conventional reproduction of it) tended to respond to the lead of both these masters. The clearest example of this was Fra Filippo Lippi. During the 1430s, Lippi tried to copy the tangibility of Masaccio's forcefully modeled figures; but at the same time he sought to achieve a richer and more lustrous surface, like those in van Eyck's paintings. (He knew at least one in Lucca, and may have traveled to Flanders to see more.) Later in his career, though, Lippi became a more conventional painter, and the illumination as well as the luster of his pictures decreased in power.

LIKE LIPPI IN the 1430s, Verrocchio was fascinated by both Masaccio and Netherlandish painting. According to Vasari, Verrocchio spent countless hours in the Brancacci Chapel copying Masaccio's frescoes. There he learned to model his figures in contrasts of light and dark (*chiaroscuro*), creating the vivid impression of their three-dimensionality (*rilievo*). Verrocchio had the most sculptural painting-style of any Tuscan artist of his generation. The outstanding characteristic of both his drawings and his paintings is the emphatic plasticity of the figures, which look almost like statues illuminated by directed light.

Since Verrocchio was a sculptor who painted in tempera, it has been assumed that he was uninterested in Northern painting. Yet Verrocchio was deeply interested in Flemish art, and this is crucial to understanding the start of Leonardo's career. The most important proof of this lies in a group of sixteen drapery studies, now spread among the museums of Europe; made in grisaille on colored linen, they are works of astonishing beauty. The precise authorship of the individual sheets is debatable, but it is generally agreed that the studies were created in Verrocchio's workshop, and that some are by him while others are by Leonardo. (At least one is by Ghirlandaio.)

The sixteen studies are always called drawings, but in fact they were made with distemper, a glue-based medium, on canvas. From a technical standpoint, then, they are paintings, not drawings. Once we realize this, our understanding of the group changes irrevocably. As drawings, they would be unique works without parallel. As paintings, they have a clear precedent. In Italy, the medium of distemper on canvas generally had been reserved for processional banners; but in the Netherlands, it was a far more common medium, used for both secular and religious works of "high" art. Grisaille, too, is a technique more often found in Flanders. This indicates that Verrocchio and his assistants studied and copied Flemish distemper paintings, presumably in the collection of the Medici, who had assembled a relatively large group of such works.

The importance of the drapery studies is that they combine dramatic contrasts of white and black as well as fine gradations of value, creating the illusion of strong sculptural volume. At the same time, they also emphasize the shimmering and glowing lights reflected off of the surfaces of the drapery. In other words, these studies are experiments in how to balance illumination and luster. They are attempts to combine the local tradition of Masaccio with the foreign tradition of van Eyck and Flemish art.

LEONARDO RESPONDED TO this setting and this training in a way that was characteristic of his genius. He turned his supreme powers of analytical observation to the nature of light, and broke it down into three constituent elements: illumination, luster, and hue. (His surviving journals record hundreds of scientific observations about the properties of light.) He also analyzed the mimetic capacities of Florentine and Flemish painting, and made note of both what they could do and what they could not do. Armed with his new understanding of optics, he then devised a revolutionary way of making pictures that integrated the chief features of the two traditions. The course of his development as an artist in the 1470s is largely the story of his discoveries about the nature of light and the representation of its effects in painting.

A fundamental part of this story lies in Leonardo's experimentation with oil paint. Egg tempera had been the basic medium for panel painting in Italy, but oil was the primary medium in Flanders; oil had been used previously in Italy as well, but in a more limited way, chiefly for glazes with certain pigments. Around the middle of the fifteenth century, in response to Flemish painting, many Italian artists had begun experimenting with using oil more, often applying oil and tempera in the same work; but such experimentation was still rare in Florence in the 1460s and 1470s. Leonardo may have been the first central Italian artist to work primarily in oil rather than tempera, from the very beginning of his career.

He understood that oil is superior to tempera in the depiction of illumination, luster, and hue: the properties of light fundamental to painting. It is worth explaining why this is so. Tempera paint dries almost immediately, must be applied in short small brushstrokes, and does not readily permit the artist to blend adjacent areas of color. To model in light and dark, therefore, the artist must make changes in tone or color of minute but finite gradation. But oil dries relatively slowly, it can be applied in long brushstrokes, and it permits the artist to blend adjacent areas of tone or color. As a result, the artist can make changes in value between light and dark along an infinite spectrum of chiaroscuro; this creates a far more convincing and naturalistic illusion of volume.

Writing in 1550, Vasari explained this difference: "Oil ... renders them [the colors] more delicate and more readily blended than do the other mediums. While the work is wet the colors readily mix and unite one with the other; in short, by this method the artists impart wonderful ... vigor to the figures, so much so that these often seem in relief and ready to issue forth from the panel." Oil is better at the depiction of luster, because it is a translucent medium, with a richer and more glossy surface, whereas tempera tends to be opaque, matte, and dry. In tempera, moreover, the inherent values of pigments (say, that blue is darker than yellow) tend to dominate, making it difficult to achieve naturalistic tonal unity. As John Shearman has observed, this feature accentuates the linear qualities of the painting, because the limits of every object or area "are marked by a sharp transition to a new color and to a new range of tonal values." It is for this reason that an early Quattrocento picture can look something like a collage of colored patches.

LEONARDO OVERCAME the limitations of traditional Florentine painting. As a group, his paintings have never been subjected to systematic technical examination, and our understanding of his technique is therefore partial and preliminary; but it appears he used the multi-layered structure of oil paintings as a means for separating *and* integrating the functions of modeling and color. Conceptually, he decided first to model the figures achromatically in chiaroscuro and then to place the colors on top like a thin veil over the surface of a sculpture. By these means, Leonardo could combine the powerful *rilievo* of Masaccio and Florentine painting with the more accurate depiction of atmosphere, color, and texture of van Eyck and Netherlandish art.

The *Annunciation* in the Uffizi, from around 1472, is the first extant picture

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displaying Leonardo's new understanding and technique. Another important milestone is the portrait of Ginevra de' Benci in the National Gallery of Art. It is not a tempera painting merely updated and translated into oil. It may be, instead, the first Florentine painting planned fundamentally in terms of the capacities of oil. Its composition, with the perforated and back-lit screen of foliage, would be inconceivable in a painting made of tempera alone; and the sitter's physical beauty, poetic sensibility, and moral character are conveyed primarily by the exquisite quality of the cool, almost lunar light reflected off her skin. The portrait is also remarkable because, of all Leonardo's paintings, it gives the clearest evidence of his debt to Netherlandish painting. As Brown and others have noted, the portrait resembles a picture by Petrus Christus, now in Berlin. Leonardo knew that picture (or another just like it) when it was one of the most highly prized treasures of the Medici collection.

THE *ADORATION OF THE MAGI* is the last painting that Leonardo began before moving to Milan around 1482, and although it is not finished, it is rightly celebrated as a masterpiece of the highest order. We know from documents that Leonardo meant it to be a polychromatic work with some details even in gilding. Before abandoning the picture, however, all he painted was the monochromatic substructure in different tones of brown or black. (It is hard to tell which, under the ancient varnish.) In its sculptural plasticity, the substructure is unprecedented in the history of European painting, and the composition appears to have been conceived and realized largely in terms of tonal values. Leonardo stated that "lights and darks ... comprise the excellence of the science of painting." The *Adoration* is a visual manifesto of this belief.

Thus the revolution in Florentine art that Masaccio began was completed and transformed by Leonardo. Synthesizing elements of Florentine and Netherlandish technique, he raised painting to a new magnitude of power, and in this way he became an artist of pan-European scope and significance. Leonardo believed that the ideal artist was the "universal painter" who could depict any detail or event in the natural world, no matter how complex or ephemeral. He claimed painting to be a "science ... born of nature," capable of representing "all the works of nature." Before Leonardo, such an ambition would scarcely have been conceivable. In his hands, for the first time, painting described almost the full range of visual reality. ■

Arabian Fables (I)

How the Arabs soften up world opinion with fanciful myths.

Josef Goebbels, the infamous propaganda minister of the Nazis, had it right. Just tell people big lies often enough and they'll believe them. The Arabs have learned that lesson well. They have swayed world opinion by myths and lies that have no basis in fact.

What are some of these myths?

The "Palestinians". The concept of "Palestinians" did not exist until about 1948. Until then, the Jews were the Palestinians. There was the Palestinian Brigade of Jewish volunteers in the British World War II Army (at a time when the Palestinian Arabs were in Berlin hatching plans with Adolf Hitler for world conquest and how to kill all the Jews); there was the Palestinian Symphony Orchestra (all Jews, of course); there was *The Palestine Post*; and so much more.

The Arabs who now call themselves "Palestinians" do so in order to persuade a misinformed world that they are a distinct nationality and that "Palestine" is their ancestral homeland. But they are no distinct nationality at all. They are the same as the Arabs of Syria, Jordan, and beyond. There is no more difference between the "Palestinians" and the other Arabs of those countries than there is between, say, the citizens of Minnesota and those of Wisconsin. What's more, many of the "Palestinians", or their immediate ancestors, came to the area attracted by the prosperity created by the Jews, in what previously had been pretty much of a wasteland. The nationhood of the "Palestinians" is a myth.

The "West Bank". Again, this is a concept that did not exist until 1948, when six Arab armies invaded the Jewish state of Israel, on the very day of its creation. Miraculously, the ragtag Jewish forces defeated the combined Arab might. But Transjordan stayed in possession of Judea and Samaria and eastern Jerusalem. The Jordanians expelled all the Jews, destroyed all Jewish houses of worship, and renamed as "West Bank" the territories that had been Judea and Samaria since time immemorial. The attempt, quite successful, was to persuade an uninformed world that these were ancestral parts of the Jordanian Arab Kingdom.

Even after the total rout of the Arabs in the 1967 Six-Day War, in which the Jordanians were driven out of Judea/Samaria and of Jerusalem, they and the world continued to call this territory the "West Bank", a geographical and political concept that cannot be found on any except the most recent maps.

The concept of the "West Bank" is a myth.

"The web of lies and myths that the Arab propaganda machine has created plays an important role in the unrelenting quest to destroy the State of Israel. What a shame that the world has accepted most of it!"

The "Occupied Territories". After the victorious Six-Day War, during which the Israeli army defeated the same cabal of Arabs that had invaded the country in 1948, Israel regained possession of Judea/Samaria, the Gaza Strip, which had been occupied by the Egyptians, and of the Golan Heights, a plateau the size of Queens, which, though originally part of Palestine, had been assigned to Syria by British-French agreement.

The last sovereign in Judea/Samaria and in Gaza was the British mandatory power — and before it was the Ottoman Empire. All of Palestine, including what is now the Kingdom of Jordan, was, by the Balfour Declaration, destined to be the Jewish National Home. How then could the Israelis possibly be "occupiers" in their own territory? Who would be the sovereign and who the rightful inhabitants?

The concept of "occupied territories" is an Arab propaganda myth.

Unable so far to destroy Israel on the battlefield — though they are feverishly preparing for their next assault — the Arabs are now trying to overcome and destroy Israel by their acknowledged "policy of stages". That policy is to get as much land as possible carved out of Israel "by peaceful and diplomatic" means, so as to make Israel indefensible and softened up for the final assault. The web of lies and myths that the Arab propaganda machine has created plays an important role in the unrelenting quest to destroy the State of Israel. What a shame that the world has accepted most of it!

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CAMBRIDGE DIARIST

Pomp

ALAN GREENSPAN WAS THE speaker at Harvard commencement exercises on June 10, exactly 30 years after the 1969 ceremonies that were so fraught with the tensions of the Vietnam War and with other characteristic expressions against what was then widely seen—at least among many students and some faculty—as the depredations of capitalism. The gathering of graduating seniors in the Old Yard for the procession three decades ago remains vivid in my mind: an assembly dominated by articulately alienated young people whose anger against "the system" seemed to apply also, perhaps especially, to the university they were about to leave. But the armbands on their academic gowns named other targets and other causes.

AMONG THE HONORARY DEGREE RECIPIENTS that year were John Lindsay, the Republican mayor of New York, whom the neo-cons had already tagged, not altogether unfairly, as a "limousine liberal"; David Rockefeller, that generation's head of the clan already known then more for its gargantuan (if not exactly imaginative) philanthropies than for its entrepreneurship; and the head of the United Auto Workers, Walter Reuther, whose long-term contract with capitalism seemed to institutionalize the system's taming by democracy. As a social symbol in ordinary times, this lineup would have been not just shrewd but persuasive. But, in 1969, every emblematic concession by the university was taken both as cynicism and as a confession of weakness. So even Reuther, a real hero of American labor, was jeered by those whose most arduous work might test their brains but probably not their brawn.

FOR TWELVE YEARS, GREENSPAN HAS BEEN the architect of America's prosperity. But, if he has made capitalism more efficient and more productive, he hasn't made it kinder. To be sure, it is probably the case that kindness is not properly in his portfolio. In any case, that is certainly what he thinks. Under him, the Fed does not raise or lower underlying interest rates to produce any particular social consequence. His function is to avert inflation—which, of course, does have social consequences. Maintaining the value of money, for example, is important to people living on fixed incomes. It is by now a cliché that, under the Greenspan regime (which for the last half of the chairman's reign has also been the Clinton-Gore-Rubin regime), unemployment numbers are so low (at 4.2 percent, the lowest since the 1960s) and employment numbers so high (total employment reached 133.2 million in May) that, according to the economic theories they taught at Harvard in the '60s, inflation should already be a major threat. But it's not. When Jimmy Carter left office in 1981, the rate of inflation was twelve percent; as Clinton prepares to leave office, inflation hovers just above two percent. The recent uneven correction in the price of stocks notwithstanding, we've been living with an unprecedented steady increase in the value of securities. The Dow closed at 3,241.95 on Inauguration Day, 1993; now it hovers near the 11,000 mark. More people are in the markets than ever before, and young people, too. This is what my friend (and partner in TheStreet.com) Jim Cramer calls "real people's capitalism." Some of it is attributable to trading on the Web, which makes it objectively easier and much more this-generational. I don't want to pretend: I actually haven't the slightest idea how many Harvard seniors and recipients of higher degrees who applauded Greenspan when the president of the university pronounced his benediction actually buy and sell stocks themselves. But the cheers of the throng did tell you that capitalism's top engineer is something of a hero among the well-educated young. And capitalism itself is in high repute among them, too.

I DON'T HAVE THE EXACT STATISTICS. BUT brainpower now gravitates to business. It is true that there are more applicants—and highly qualified applicants, at that—to medical school now than there were, say, ten or 15 years ago. And this is the case even though the income of doctors is headed south, way south. Moreover, doctors' lives are increasingly enmeshed in the exasperating tangles of managed care. Either one of these facts would suggest that med school applications should be in decline. That they are doing precisely the opposite means that financial reward does not tell all.

STILL, PHYSICIANS DO MAKE DECENT, EVEN good, livings, which can't quite be said for research life-scientists in their early thirties. Brilliant—dazzlingly brilliant—postdoctoral fellows (who often have both Ph.D. and M.D. degrees) in university laboratories often have to moonlight. Well, so what? you ask; other people also need two jobs to support their families. But the primary job of a biochemist or immunologist is almost never an eight-hour day, and he or she is ruled by an unpredictable clock of process, observation, and results. Your average moonlighter also hasn't spent ten or twelve years in training at a university. I am on the boards of two research institutes at the Harvard Medical School. At both of these remarkable places, even researchers working on hard-to-get NIH grants earn about $26,000 to $30,000 a year. Still, even a starting job at the Center for Blood Research or the Mapplethorpe Laboratory draws dozens of highly certified applicants. This means that, for many men and women just out of college and graduate school, psychological and intellectual rewards still matter and matter much more than cash rewards. In fact, the dynamics of the market economy are nearly absent from this end of the scientific culture despite the fact that it is the usual incubation point for medicines which will soon turn enormous profits for pharmaceutical companies. The engine of progress is, at least in such instances, surely not money but conceptual challenge.

THERE IS A TERRIBLE SHORTAGE OF JOBS in the universities, where, increasingly, men and women with Ph.D.s hang on to various forms of underpaid adjunct posts. Believe me, it happens at Harvard, too. This also reflects the fact that many more college graduates go on to graduate school than the system can absorb. One reason for the paucity of appointments is the late Florida Congressman Claude Pepper's legacy that prevents mandatory retirement at a stated age. Still, this is not the whole story. Despite the dim job prospects, people go to graduate school fundamentally because it allows them to do the work they love. But it does indenture them to genteel poverty. Thirty years ago, an even greater percentage of bright college graduates opted for the academic life. Their job prospects then were very good. (And the alternative for many, the draft, was not so good.) Today, however, many otherwise would-be professors choose business. They go directly from their senior year to high-pay, long-hour consultancies at places such as McKinsey and BCG or to jobs in the dicey but unbelievably remunerative information technology universe. Here, financial reward does count, and it counts a lot. But it is also intellectually extremely exacting and, therefore, also rewarding. Such young people, some just out of college, have in fact revolutionized the way we live and the way we work, on balance much for the better. This is a clear case of market dynamics at one with scientific and social advance. What role exactly Alan Greenspan has played in this transaction I do not know. But he certainly hasn't impeded it.

MARTIN PERETZ

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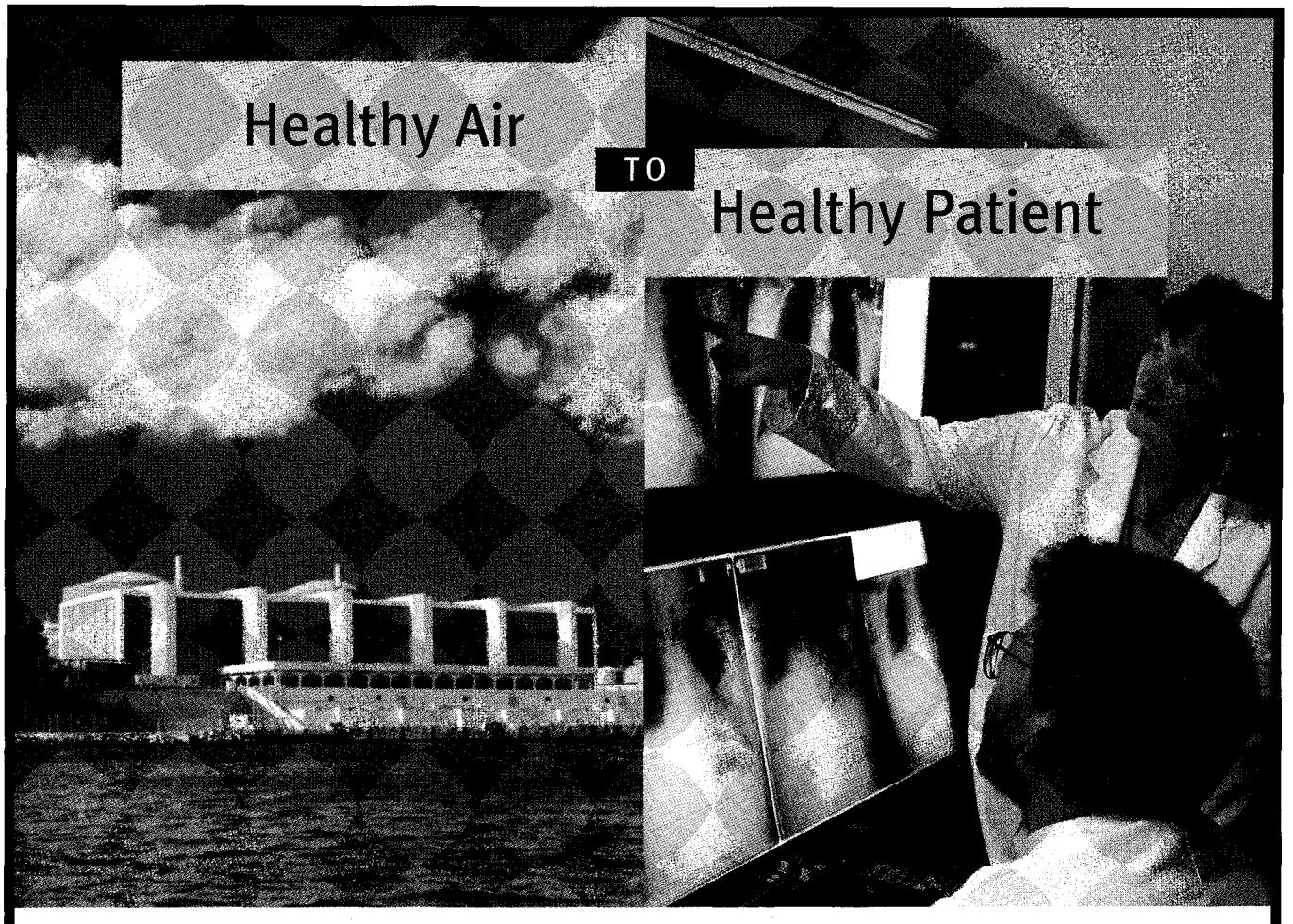

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